DISSENT

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The Road to 1972
Politics and Society in the Nixon Era

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JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1969 $1

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DISSENT issued January 1, 1969, is published bimonthly, January-February March-April, May-June, July-August, September-October, November-December, by Dissent Publishing Corporation, 509 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. Subscriptions: $6.00 for one year; $10.00 for two years; $3.50 for students for one year; foreign subscriptions, including Canada, add $1.00 mailing costs per year. All payments from foreign countries must be made by United States money orders or checks payable in United States currency. Single copy, $1.00. For special rates on bulk orders from organizations, teachers, etc., write directly to DISSENT. For information on newsstand and bookstore distribution write to: Eastern News Co., 155 West Fifteenth Street, New York, N.Y. 10001.

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DISSENT

JANUARY–FEBRUARY 1969

DISSENT is a journal devoted to radical ideas and the values of socialism and democracy. It seeks to serve as a forum for writers devoted to these ideas and values, while also welcoming a wide variety of other opinions. Each writer speaks for himself; there is no effort made to exact editorial consensus or uniformity.

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Well, not quite a million! But the response of our readers to our biannual fund appeal has been intensely gratifying.

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Michael Harrington

The Road to 1972

WHEN FOUR YEARS of Republican rule end in January 1973, the United States of America is likely to be even more torn by internal crisis than it was in the last, shambling days of Lyndon Johnson's Administration. I write this prediction less than two months before the scheduled inauguration of Richard Nixon and in the waning days of a year that has been disastrous for prophets. In the winter of 1968 the Vietcong Tet offensive subverted the credibility of both the American military and Lyndon Johnson himself and helped Eugene McCarthy to confound all the soothsayers in the New Hampshire primary. In the spring Martin Luther King, Jr., was shot down while fighting for the rights of sanitation men in Memphis, and Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated as he campaigned for the Presidency in California.

In the summer the Democrats and the Republicans measured up to times of tumult and tragedy by nominating two representatives of the old politics; and by early fall it seemed certain that a noncampaign was going to elect Richard Nixon by a resigned, unhappy acclamation. Hubert Humphrey, it seemed, might even come in third, behind the most powerful rightist (and even semifascistic) leader in recent American history, George C. Wallace. But at the last moment all the polls had to be revised, Humphrey nearly won the popular vote, and there were several hours in which it appeared that a Constitutional crisis was in the offing.

Under such circumstances, the emergence of a frightened and bewildered political agnosticism would be completely understandable. Yet if men are to control events rather than be subject to them—and that is a major goal of the democratic Left—it is necessary to try to discern the underlying trends that are at work in these various surprises and shocks. To get some insight into this process does not, as will be seen, guarantee that political victory can be calculated and planned. But it is the precondition of even beginning to put our destiny under our control. What I write here is neither star-gazing nor an exercise in academic futurism but an attempt to help the Left better transform the immediate future by better understanding the immediate past.

What is needed is a new majority political coalition of the democratic Left capable of winning the Presidency in 1972. But before turning to the tactics of such an effort, let me suggest in broadest outline what I take to be the probabilities and tendencies of change as America enters the seventies under Republican rule.

When this Administration completes its term, the United States is likely to have more social problems than now; more racism, more urban deterioration. In saying this, I do not picture Richard Nixon as some kind of a rightist demon but as a moderate conservative in a time when basic problems cannot be solved without radical departures. And I make the optimistic assumption that the horrible war in Vietnam will be over and that a chastened America will not rush to make another such tragic commitment. So I project that crying domestic needs will be unsatisfied even though the conflict in Southeast Asia, which destroyed Lyndon Johnson's Great Society at home, is decisively ended.

For even with the billions that will be freed for construction when the carnage stops in Vietnam, there is no sign that the Republican Administration and the conservative Congress will do anything but commit the worst mis-

This article, slightly adapted, forms the afterword to a new paperback edition of *Toward a Democratic Left*, to be issued by the Macmillan Company, New York.

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takes of their Democratic predecessors. In the campaign of 1968 Richard Nixon formally promised the American people that he would step up the expenditure of federal funds for the creation and socialization of public crises while cutting back on the token programs that sometimes even helped a bit. At a time when there is so much official evidence of the utter inability of Adam Smith's invisible hand to solve systematic, ingeniously devised problems of man's conscious making, there is this resolute call to further privatize a government that has already done so much for corporations at the expense of citizens.

If these projections are at all accurate, they make diametrically opposed political developments quite possible. On the one hand, there could be a bitter struggle between the have-littles and have-nots, the whites and the blacks, the organized and the unorganized, the poor and the ex-poor, for scarce jobs, housing, and education. That would make it totally impossible to build a progressive majority in America, and it would feed the emotions which made George Wallace the most successful rightist demagogue in modern American electoral history. Or, if there were an emergent movement of the democratic Left, these very same conditions could radicalize millions of Americans and persuade them to follow a new leadership calling for political realignment and innovation.

The trends will not decide which of these, the ugly or the hopeful, will prevail. Men will. Within this context, let me attempt to map out a democratic Left road to 1972.

II

ONE OF THE many myths propagated by Republicans in the political battles of 1968, and credited by far too many liberals, was the notion that our crises had intensified because Washington, with pretenses to omnipotence, had "done too much." Since this delusion has been announced as a leading idea of the Republican Presidency, it is worth analyzing. For in housing, transportation, agriculture, job generation, and welfare, 1968 corroborated the theme that Washington, while talking massive programs, has acted timidly and, worst of all, that there has been a real tendency for these inadequate programs to exacerbate, rather than alleviate, the miseries and inequities of the society. It is because the Republican party has a principled position in favor of such counterproductive policies that I feel the outlook for the early seventies is gloomy.

In February 1968 Mr. Johnson put the seal of Presidential approval on the crisis figures about housing need and said that the country had to construct 26 million units in 10 years, 6 million of them governmentally subsidized and low-cost. He thus increased the target of the White House Conference in 1966 by 20 per cent, but then the Administration and Congress had ignored that more modest proposal anyway. Ironically, the architect of the Great Society announced at the same time that he was determined to fulfill Robert Taft's 1949 low-cost housing goals but did not mention that the nation had dropped 15 years behind that conservative Republican's expectations. The *New York Times* rightly noted that the Johnson message was "essentially conservative." When the Housing Act was passed, many editorialists were pleased with this or that item in it but almost all agreed that it was most unlikely that these new ideas would really be funded.

So it was that, in November 1968, the cover of the trade journal *American Builder* asked, "Who Really Gives a Damn About Housing?" and answered, "Not the cities; they're headed for a decade of failure. Not the suburbs; they couldn't care less. Not the rural areas; everyone's leaving them. Not the power structure. All they do is talk, talk, talk." In its proposals for positive action, the *American Builder* had advocated such reforms as a national land policy and land bank, an end to unplanned and socially catastrophic highway construction, taking zoning power away from suburbs (it is primarily used to keep out the poor and the black), Congressional appropriations for programs Congress passes in principle, and so on.

But perhaps the most daring, radical idea was put forth by Dwight Eisenhower. Addressing himself to the issue of slums and ghettos, he wrote,

> We shall never solve these problems simply by tearing out vast areas of sub-standard dwellings and stacking people vertically in new high-rise apartment complexes. [Instead, he went on,] the first essential of any realistic hous-

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ing plan is to reduce the density of population by encouraging large numbers of people to relocate in new, more wholesome communities. These new towns would have their own schools, shops, clinics and hospitals, their own light industry and recreational facilities. For those who do not find employment locally, swift mass transportation should be created to take them to jobs in the cities. Needless to say, these new areas must not be just added enclaves of segregation. They must be open and made inviting to people of all races.

It is not exactly clear why the former Republican President thus adopts a solution which might have been borrowed from the European socialists. However, in defense of Mr. Eisenhower's conservative credentials, he goes on to suggest that his scheme will be carried out by private enterprise. That, I believe, is simply not going to happen. But it is still significant that Eisenhower has some perception of the radical changes which present conditions demand. The National Commission for a National Land Policy has advocated the construction of 25 new cities which would, in 40–60 years, reach populations of 1 million each. At the University of Minnesota, researchers have been designing a new city that could be built on open land, a hundred miles from any other urban area, and could house 250,000 people at a cost of $4 billion. In one version of the scheme, there would be no vehicles on the surface level and all deliveries would be made underground.

So the practicality of radically solving the urban crisis is not only obvious to intellectuals and planners but to a former Republican President as well. But a Johnson Administration, which was somewhat more sympathetic to such an approach than the Republicans are likely to be, could only legislate pathetic tokenism in this area. To get an idea of how dramatic the break with the past must be, consider the shocking figures of the 1968 Report of the National Commission on Civil Disorder: *in 31 years, the United States government subsidized 650,000 units of low-cost housing while in roughly the same period (34 years) it provided invisible supports, like cheap credit and handsome tax deductions, for the construction of more than 10 million units of middle- and upper-class housing.* If the nation were to honor the President's 1968 goal of housing for the poor, it would have to build 10 times more units for the poor in 10 years than it has built in the previous 31. If the target of the Riot Commission is taken, then that rate must be doubled.

It does not take a seer to suggest that the Republican Administration of the late sixties and early seventies will not undertake such a sweeping reordering of social priorities. It will, Richard Nixon promised in the 1968 campaign, give the subsidies to private business instead. I have already set out a critique of this proposal (see DISSENT, January–February 1968), but some 1968 data are so vivid that they should be noted. In April 1968, David Boldt wrote an article for the *Wall Street Journal,* "Industry in the Slums? It's not that Easy." He told how the Watts Community Redevelopment Agency had come up with a plan for a 35-acre industrial park. The Watts Citizens Committee, led by Ted Watkins, an Autoworkers Union activist, turned the scheme down. Watkins said, "What we don't need is a bunch of low-pay sweat shops that don't give a man enough incentive to get off of welfare."

Even more pertinent, the people of Watts were suspicious of a Southern Pacific Railroad plan which would have cut a five-block swath through the center of the community. They did not find this an efficacious way of saving their neighborhood, particularly if it was going to be financed with the help of "antipoverty" funds.

Another revealing report appeared in the *Journal* in October. Albert R. Hunt described the much-touted, government-supported, panacea-to-end-panaceas—efforts to use the federal carrot to persuade the private sector to create jobs. It was discovered, Hunt said, that ghetto costs were several times that in prime labor areas and taxes were high. When a company goes into such a rotting neighborhood, the plants are small and the products simple (they are a cut above the sweatshops Watkins feared, but only a cut). Four big companies had indeed gone into the slums: Westinghouse, AVCO, IBM, and Control Data. Their investment had yielded a total of 870 jobs. Westinghouse, to take a striking example, held a big press conference to publicize its Pittsburgh plant in a poor area, which would put 75 people to work. At the same time, and without a lot of publicity, it was building a $65 million

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facility in the outskirts of Charlotte, which will employ more than 1,000 workers and make turbines for atomic electric utility plants. The employees there, one might guess, will not be poverty-stricken.

Therefore, during the year when Mr. Nixon was making the private-sector panacea for the solution of social problems a centerpiece of his campaign, that very private sector, as viewed in the business press, was indicating that it was not very interested beyond a token gesture here or there ("fire insurance" in the ghetto some cynics called these installations). Or else, like the corporate interests who wanted to cut Watts to pieces, free enterprise was too interested in the worst possible way.

One other case should also be noted. In Detroit, the federal government has successfully urged the auto industry, and Henry Ford in particular, to hire "unemployables" from the ghetto. In this way some 5,000 jobs have been created at Ford with much celebration. Yet an analysis by Robert C. Albrook in the August 1968 issue of *Fortune* put this happy development in a somber perspective: "With unemployment rates of below 4 per cent recently, job creation on a big scale may have been rational and profitable for a big company. But if the rate moved back up toward 5 per cent, hiring the hard-core unemployed might mean turning away experienced workers."

This prediction takes on an almost sinister cast when one considers that the Business Council—that group whose ubiquitous, semi-official power is attested by Gardiner Ackley—at its October 1968 meeting, proposed to combat inflation by raising unemployment to 5.5 per cent or 6 per cent. Of the 100 corporate chieftains who met at Hot Springs, Virginia, to propose that the poor thus suffer to save the prosperity of the affluent, 80 per cent were estimated to be supporters of Richard Nixon. There were also prominent advocates of the capitalist conscience who had not bothered to consider that their nostrum would almost certainly wipe out all the labor-market gains of the war on poverty—and more. Henry Ford's recruits would be back on the street.

In other words, massive job generation to do away with the Depression-like underemployment of the impoverished, and particularly the blacks among them, is simply not going to take place in the private sector even with federal subsidies. There are, of course, the millions of public-service, nonprofit occupations identified by the Automation Commission and re-emphasized by the Riot Commission. Congress could begin to fund them any time it wants to, but there is little likelihood that the humane bills of Congressman James O'Hara and former Senator Joseph Clark will be acted upon by a Republican Administration and a conservative Congress.

THERE ARE OTHER determinants of our public woes which will, at best, stay as bad as they are under Nixon. After hundreds of official speeches about the need for an integrated transportation policy, Congress in 1968 passed a law which enshrined the highways-over-all approach, mandated the Los Angelization of Washington, D.C. (some people there had asserted their rights as against freeways and had to be put down by a federal law), made the beautification program even more of a joke than it had been, and struck a blow against wildlife. And in November 1968, the road-building industry was fighting furiously against new federal rules that would allow a modicum of public participation before decisions are made on highway design.

At the end of September, 30 Republican congressmen changed their vote in order to help the Nixon campaign and thus defeated a $20,000 ceiling on agricultural subsidies. In 1967, some 9,952 farmers had received $408 million—James O. Eastland, the impartial plantation owner on the Senate Agricultural Committee took in $211,364 that year—and this had helped, of course, to displace even more undereducated rural poor people who would soon be showing up on city relief rolls.

But then welfare was in its usually impossible state. The Riot Commission discovered that in 1967 in Newark, Detroit, and New Haven (three important centers of riot), the median percentage of ghetto inhabitants covered by federal programs in manpower, education, housing, community action and relief was one-third (similarly, the Council of Economic Advisers estimated a year or two earlier that two-thirds of those officially classified as poor get no public assistance). The Commission also noted that welfare provides an aver-

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age of one-half of what people desperately need throughout the nation and in some places gets down to 25 per cent of need.

Washington admits that there must be a most dramatic break with the lethargic housing programs of the past. It affirms that there must be socially conscious transportation and agricultural policy, and publishes detailed figures on the minimum requirements of human decency. It then proposes a pittance for housing, reaffirms catastrophic transportation and farm programs, and lets welfare rot. Since Richard Nixon seems likely to follow the very worst of these trends, and to try to make the private sector ethical when it either doesn't want to or will act only when it can use public monies to institutionalize old injustices, the probabilities are that the United States will be in worse condition on January 20, 1972, than on January 20, 1968.

It is this domestic reality which, short of another Vietnam or worse, will create the background of American politics in the coming period. Foreign policy does not generally determine who wins or loses elections unless, as in the case of Vietnam, it upsets the internal equilibrium. So I will only remark here that 1968 brought a further retreat in foreign aid and that the Republicans have promised to rely less on aid than on trade, which is rigged to the advantage of rich countries and therefore is a root cause of backwardness in the Third World.

It is almost certain now that the "Development Decade" of the United Nations will end as a complete failure, and even with the prospect of increasing famine. At the same time, the celebrants of American corporate virtue have recently been lavishly praising one of the causes of this tragedy: the multinational corporation. The big companies have for some time been working out schemes of international economic planning for private profit which have the profound, and incidental, effect of perpetuating the miseries of the ex-colonies. After all, General Motors has the eighteenth largest GNP on the globe (at $20.2 billion in 1967, it ranked ahead of Argentina, Belgium, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia, among others), Ford is the twenty-third richest industrial power, Standard Oil of New Jersey the twenty-fourth, and General Electric, at the thirty-fourth position, has more of an output than Greece.

As Sanford Rose described these world businesses in *Fortune*, "Carrying multinationalism to the logical extreme, a corporation will concentrate its production in the area where costs are lowest, and build up its sales where the market is most lucrative." Should a developing country with foreign exchange difficulties object to such a calculus—which intensifies all the injustices of the international division of labor—then a multinational corporation could veto the decision of such a supposedly sovereign power. It could, Rose says, "simply 'take out' its dividends by raising prices on intra-corporate sales proportionately" and thus nullify the local government's refusal to repatriate profits.

It is, once again, clear that if General Motors is able to engage in international economic planning for its private purposes, the United Nations should be able to do so for public and social ends. And it is just as clear that a Republican America will not support such a minimal step toward global decency but, with its links and commitments to the private sector, will accentuate the worst trends abroad as well as at home. This will mean a prolongation of the agony of the majority of the people of the world, a condition which might lead to another Vietnam.

III

So THE ECONOMIC and social perspective for the early seventies is not exactly cheering. But it would be a serious mistake to think, as some on the American Left have argued, that a radical failure to respond to the needs of the poor, the blacks, and the social sector generally will necessarily give rise to a progressive movement seeking radical solutions. The exact opposite reaction is possible and, with the frightening impact of George Wallace in 1968, that ugly alternative is already a part of reality.

Trotsky said of the German Communists before the rise of Hitler that they infuriated all classes and won none. There is something analogous to that insight (and much, of course, that is not) in the way Lyndon Johnson provoked such widespread hostility only four years after his landslide election. He made

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extravagant promises to the poor, and particularly the blacks, which raised militancy and hope but, when he accomplished so little, incited anger. Meanwhile, many white workers and members of the lower middle class did not realize that the bold programs were more rhetoric than substance. They thought that they were being discriminated against and the resultant backlash sentiment gave Wallace shocking support in the industrial North early in the campaign. Meanwhile, the best children of the affluent were horrified by the war and disillusioned by all the broken social promises which it occasioned and their anger helped create an opposition that held a third of the seats at the Democratic Convention.

There were some leftists who mistakenly then concluded that a Nixon victory would make it easier to win the Democratic party in 1972 than Humphrey's election. They were wrong, perhaps tragically so. For if the Nixon record is only as bad as Eisenhower's in the fifties—unemployment, chronic in order to get price stability, growth at a snail's pace in the name of fiscal responsibility, etc.—then the economic omens could be conducive to a George Wallace. Under such conditions, there could be even greater incentives to fratricide at the bottom of the society since there could be militant movements disputing scarce goods.

One reason this point is not so widely understood comes, paradoxically, from the heightened consciousness of poverty. For once the economic underworld was rediscovered, there were those who pictured the society as divided between the poor and the affluent. Yet there is a huge "at risk" population hovering just above the poverty line. And, even more pertinently, *two-thirds* of the families in America have less than the $9,191 a year required to maintain a "moderate standard of living" as computed by the Department of Labor (it used 1966 figures and, given inflation, the actual income would have to be higher today). That means that the have-nots and the have-littles, the impoverished and the struggling, comprise the overwhelming majority of the population. If, as is certainly possible, the economic policies of the Republican Administration drive this vast mass to a civil war, rather than to a confrontation with the real power in the land, rightist demagoguery could have a field day.

This rightist trend need not prevail; there is a road to 1972 for the democratic Left. And, though I was as surprised as the next man by the incredible, unpredictable events of 1968, I would argue that they corroborate the idea for building a majority party with a radical program.

To begin with, there has clearly been a vast expansion of the political power and influence of the college-educated, a phenomenon so striking that it might herald the appearance of a "new class." To some the appeal of Eugene McCarthy and the late Robert Kennedy in 1968 seemed to be a fad among the "kids" and not much else. Yet by the fall of 1968 almost every practical pol in America, including many hacks, was proclaiming his loyalty to the "new politics." This was a professional recognition of the importance of this new constituency. But these young people were not up for grabs. They were activist and concerned with issues and, through the reform movement they helped bring to the Democratic convention, they won historic changes in the party structure—ending the unit rule, changing the mode of election of delegates, etc.—even though they lost the Presidential nomination and the Vietnam debate. (And though the vote on the latter issue went against them, they could properly claim credit for having been a factor in changing their country's foreign policy.)

But if 1968 dramatically revealed the mass potential of this new conscience constituency, it also defined its limitations. The McCarthy campaign never really reached out to the poor, the blacks, or the white workers. Robert Kennedy did (which is why I supported him, joining the McCarthy campaign after his death). The assassin struck Robert Kennedy down before he had the chance to prove his case and candidacy. So, as it turned out, the opposition at the Chicago Convention was much too exclusively college educated and not at all representative of the other groups in America which need social change. As one who worked in that movement, I feel that its greatest danger is a tendency toward self-righteousness and elitism, a lack of sympathy for those who view politics as a bread-and-butter necessity rather than as an idealistic avocation.

This was also true of the ultra Left and

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antipolitical confrontationists in 1968. That Mayor Daley denied them the effective right to assemble, and encouraged the police to assault them—and even bystanders—in a sickening, fascistic show of force was of course an outrage. But at the same time, one must be critical of those who, sometimes in the name of radicalism, adopted modes of political language and shock tactics that were guaranteed to provoke the vast majority of Americans to anger and push them to the Right. The Hippie philosophy of "doing one's thing" is appropriate to a drop-out and even may have an integrity of its own; but it is a disastrous precept for those who want to change society by winning a popular majority to end the misery of the slums and ghettos.

THE MAIN IMPACT of the conscience constituency was positive. Therefore it is all the more clear, in assembling a new majority for 1972, that "kids" have to be treated as an adult political force which, for reasons of demography and economics, is likely to have an even greater impact on society as time goes on. If there is a certain disillusionment among this stratum as a result of the outcome of 1968, it is a major task of the democratic Left to win them back to political activism.

Second, the news of the disappearance of the American working class is premature.

I disagreed with the political stance of most of the AFL–CIO unions in 1968 prior to the elections: support for the horrible war in Vietnam and for Lyndon Johnson, and then an alliance with the big city machines and the Southern establishment to obtain the nomination for Hubert Humphrey. Yet the fact remains that in the campaign labor provided the best organized, most cohesive mass base for Humphrey, liberal congressmen and progressive social programs. For when the moment of truth came, the Northern white workers, including many who were prejudiced, voted in line with their economic self-interest rather than their race hatreds. So it is crucial to understand the persistence of "old" (that is, one generation old) political motives in the midst of furious change. A factory is still a deeply alienating place and even though wages are up—but not as much as profits in the sixties—the typical worker has a tough time with debts, taxes, and the cost of living. There is therefore a consciousness of the need for social change which rises out of the very conditions of working class life. And it was this factor that dominated the politics of the industrial Northeast in Mr. Humphrey's surprising bid for power in 1968.

Therefore the 1968 campaign makes even more compelling the point that the organized workers must play a major role in the creation of a new majority. And the best point of contact between the middle-class conscience constituency and the politics of practical working-class necessity is on domestic social and economic issues. Therefore, when the war in Vietnam ends the effect of such a unity with a labor movement will be a basic task for the democratic Left. Above all, college graduate activists must neither act, nor think, contemptuously toward those who, through no fault of their own, were denied a higher education.

The poor, and particularly the black poor, were in motion in 1968, but there were some ambiguities. In the South, black voting strength increased tremendously, and one result was that the Democratic convention was forced to give more recognition to Negroes than ever before in history. During the California primary, Mexican-Americans, led by Cesar Chavez of the farm workers, succeeded in turning out massive majorities for Robert Kennedy in their areas. So it is plain that the poor can become a force in their own right. That, however, does not mean that such a development is easy or inevitable. Elsewhere I have written about the many factors that keep the "other Americans" from developing a class consciousness and organization. For instance, even though the most articulate and visible spokesmen of the black ghetto in 1968 were militants who scorned and detested the Administration, Hubert Humphrey received the overwhelming bulk of the Negro votes. In much the same way as most Northern white workers refused the Wallace adventure on their Right out of a deep sense of the need to defend their economic and social position, so most Negroes rejected the ultramilitant appeals on their Left.

However, it must be candidly recognized that the Northern ghettos are, to considerable measure, still unorganized. This is probably

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one of the reasons why some of the most energetic, youthful blacks are insisting upon community action at the grass roots. If this positive aspect of the black-power ideology unites more and more Negroes in on-going organizations, that will be a major contribution to all of American life. But there is a danger that such activists will be taken in by "black capitalist" panaceas such as Mr. Nixon proposed. Big business refuses to go into the slums, or does so on a token basis, on sound "economic" grounds (if one understands that "economics" in America and in the world are historically designed to favor the rich against the poor rather than being a natural law). The rents are high, the public services run down, the labor force has been systematically undereducated through no fault of its own, etc. If Negroes try to create their own entrepreneurial enclaves, they will run into the same bitter, racist facts of economic life.

To be sure, there should be government support to black business, but that should not give rise to the illusion that the number of Negro companies which can succeed in the poverty market of the ghetto are going to pull up well over 20 million Americans by their boot straps. What the Negroes must do is to change the definitions of economics—i.e. through massive, planned social investments see to it that no American, black or white, lives in a deteriorating backwater which is only attractive to cockroach capitalism and exorbitant gougers. And to do that requires that a black-led mass movement join in a democratic Left new majority.

Even with its terrible disappointments, 1968 does show that such a majority coalition is possible—and the only way to get progressive social change in America. Hubert Humphrey won the Democratic nomination on the basis of the classic Rooseveltian united front: labor, the South, the big city machines. But that united front is no longer really able to deliver a secure victory, for Wallace took the deep South, Nixon the border states, and Daley could not even deliver Illinois. Indeed, one of the reasons that Humphrey did so much better than expected—aside from his own determination—was that he veered in the direction of a new coalition once he began to run. He was almost immediately deserted or snubbed by his Southern allies, and his association with the Chicago machine was clearly costing him dearly. So he concentrated on a bread-and-butter appeal to workers and poor people, an anti-Wallace emphasis which strengthened his hold on the black vote, and an attempt to win back the McCarthy-Kennedy forces.

His belated new politics almost carried the day. It would take a foolish practical politician to try to resurrect the New Deal strategy, yet a majority coalition of the democratic Left has become, not simply desirable, but the only way to move the nation in a progressive direction. The Dixiecrats, who increasingly refuse to maintain their alliance with the liberals except when Congressional seniority is involved, should be given their walking papers, and the "loyalist" forces of the Chicago Convention, both black and white, should be recognized as the new South. The machines are coming to an end in any case. And the labor movement, the conscience constituency, the blacks and other poor groups, and the new South are, in any case, an incipient, dynamic majority—if they can unite. Building that unity is the central task of the democratic Left on the road to 1972.

Finally, 1968 gave the answer to those who urged the Left to break, for once and for all, with the corruptions of the Democratic party and to plant its own independent banner as a rallying point for the masses. I wish that politics could be so logical and straightforward; but it is not. And in 1968, the people gave such a massive demonstration of their political identification with the liberal wing of the Democrats that, despite a disastrous Convention and a badly split party, Hubert Humphrey very nearly won in a three-man race. Until there is decisive evidence of a new trend, the Left must go where people are actually struggling to resolve the problems of their daily lives. That means that the road to 1972 moves through the winning of the Democratic Presidential election to a victory for the new majority.

At some McCarthy rallies in the summer of 1968, I spoke of the extreme contrasts of the year—a vast outpouring of youthful sentiment in the mainstream and against the war; the deaths of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy; and so on—and I quoted the famous opening passage of a *Tale of Two Cities*. Dick-

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ens wrote in a conservative mood, yet his words define what confronts the democratic Left as the sixties end: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. . . ." It is the worst of times because we have lost brave leaders and the nation has moved to the Right; it is the best of times, if we have the audacity to hope and act, because it is possible to assemble a new majority, because there is a road to 1972 which runs toward the democratic Left.

Arnold S. Kaufman

Strategies for a New Politics

New Party or New Democratic Coalition?

TWO STRATEGIES for radical change compete for the favor of those on the Left who are not willing to abandon electoral activity as the principal focus of their political efforts. Some favor building a new party. Others believe the main attempt must be made within the Democratic party. Both groups think of electoral politics as the key part—but *only* a part—of a more general strategy that includes community action and political education. For example, efforts to mobilize support for the grape boycott, to develop informed opposition to the continuation of the arms race, to build grass-roots organizations that serve the needs of poor people—all are generally accepted by both groups.

I favor working within the Democratic party by helping to build the New Democratic Coalition. In this essay I have two aims: to defend this preference, and to describe a larger design by means of which those who share this preference can, over time, transform *The System* by working within it. I direct my argument toward those now involved in the New party led by Marcus Raskin, but of course the argument applies to other such efforts as well.

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I

MODEST OPTIMISM about the prospects for transforming the Democratic party into an instrument of radical change seems justified. But that is *not* what I have to show. It will be enough to establish that, however difficult traveling the Democratic party route may be, *it is more likely to succeed than building a new party*. In political life, when support for a lesser evil is based on reason and morality, it is also support for the best available alternative.

Those who want a New party seem to suppose that they need only to show that enormous obstacles must be surmounted by others who favor reconstituting the Democratic party. But their answer as to why they think the New-party road has fewer pitfalls is left clouded in mystery. Their faith seems often based on the following syllogism:

> *Those who work within a corrupt Democratic party, the Party of Daley, Johnson, and Eastland, are themselves bound to be or become corrupt. But corrupt people cannot effect morally urgent radical change.*
>
> *Therefore, only those committed to building a New party have any prospect of achieving success.*

The syllogism is, alas, unsound. Those of us committed to working in the Democratic party find the major premise understandably self-righteous. But we also find it difficult to understand how working within a new party will immunize one against such mortal political sins as co-optation and opportunism. For even if people who originally join the New party possess a moral fervor making them impregnably virtuous, the first glimpse of success will bring many others, less endowed with iron moral constitutions, flocking to the new center of power. After all, the gloriously new Labor party of Keir Hardie and Beatrice Webb soon became the party of Ramsay McDonald and later Harold Wilson. And take a sharp, objective look at what is happening within SDS. It appears that something more than original virtue is needed to build an organization that is proof against acquired vice.

Marcus Raskin and others began their efforts to build a New party some months be-

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fore the Democrats convened in Chicago. New party supporters hoped to induce Senator McCarthy to lead their national ticket once his inability to capture the Democratic nomination became clear. Since then the New party has developed to the point, according to Raskin, where it has new groups in 39 states. Raskin does not say how successful these state organizations have been, or how large they are. The impact they had on the November elections was almost nil. If the Senate race in California can be taken as an indication, then Paul Jacobs' one per cent of the vote cannot be considered an optimistic omen.

The political effort made within the Democratic party, in the primaries and in national, state, and local conventions, has meanwhile achieved some significant results. Lyndon Johnson was forced to commit self-regicide. A politically organized electoral pressure has constrained further escalation of the war. Hundreds of delegates at the Democratic national convention forced meaningful concessions and gave the nation a sense of liberal ferment. But the main goal, nomination of a suitable Presidential candidate, was lost.

During this fight a wedge of insurgency was driven deep into established party power in well over half the states. Young, intelligent, morally committed leaders emerged from the struggle: Julian Bond, Channing Phillips, Al Lowenstein, Don Peterson, Dave Hoeh, John Cashin, Paul Schrade, Jack Gore, Rudy Ortiz, and Adam Walinsky, to mention only a few. Some have achieved national stature.

These men are all members of the National Steering Committee of the New Democratic Coalition—a coalition of forces founded during the waning hours of the Chicago debacle. In Minneapolis in October, about 250 leaders of the Democratic insurgency from more than 40 states met and chose a temporary steering committee—almost half of whose members are from the minority and youth communities. State organizations now exist in 19 states; and another 8 or 9 are being formed. In many states groups loosely affiliated with NDC have made substantial inroads into established Party power.

I mention a few admittedly modest successes to indicate that NDC is past the drawing-board stage. It is a growing, partially-organized segment of that national constituency to which the Democratic party must appeal if it is again to win electoral victories in major states and at the national level.

Against this background of accomplishment, consider the obstacles the New party must surmount before it can build a base of power in order to have a hope of carrying out its program of radical change. A New party that lacks the preponderant support of black Americans is politically absurd. And there is no evidence that this organization can induce the enormous majority of black citizens to identify with it. It is true that outside those areas in which registration has sharply risen in recent years, the black vote fell far below what it had been in 1964. This certainly indicates some lack of enthusiasm for the Democratic party. Yet those who did go to the polls voted for Humphrey by huge majorities. Few ballots were cast for Dick Gregory and Eldridge Cleaver. Almost every important black leader endorsed, even if often with reluctance, the Democratic Presidential candidate. The evidence that black Americans, despite their distrust, still identify with the Democratic party is overwhelming. It seems clear that, like it or not, black Americans voted and will continue to vote for "lesser evils" nominated by the Democratic party.

In defending his idea of a New party, Raskin makes much of the fact that there has been a vast increase in the number of political independents. This is true. More than 50 million qualified voters failed to go to the polls in November. Most of these Americans, and millions of others as well, are indifferent to politics or turned off by the major parties. But Raskin deludes himself when he claims that they are ripe for involvement in the New party. Most of the independents are not radical. Most are likely to be satisfied by rejuvenated Republican or Democratic parties. Under Nixon, the Republican party is almost certain to tend a bit leftward. And Democratic insurgents have already provided the Democratic party with a more exciting image than it had during the Johnson Administration. This last may not mean much in policy terms. It certainly will not mean much if genuine radicals disdain Democratic party activity. But the point I am making—that Raskin and his friends delude themselves if they think the presence of large numbers of in-

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dependent voters makes their New party effort viable—is not affected even if the new Democratic insurgency fails to have a significant impact on Democratic party programs.

Moreover, the NDC is better able than the New party to attract those independents who are potentially militant. Why? Principally because it will use, without self-consciousness, the moral rhetoric of liberalism—a rhetoric that still evokes an affirmative response among most of those to whom an appeal must be made. For the NDC views itself as a custodian of authentic liberal values. By contrast, a large part of the New party's claim to newness is based precisely on its rejection of the language and tradition of American liberalism. Whether this judgment is morally right or wrong, it does have adverse political effects.

I want, however, to emphasize that, taken seriously, liberal ideals can have an explosive impact on policy. Just suppose due process of law, democracy, fundamental human rights, and more generally the conditions of a dignified human existence were seriously instituted within American industry. The result must be to transform property relationships, forms of industrial control, and basic conditions of work The pursuit of private profit could not remain the controlling consideration which, despite all public-relations chatter to the contrary, it continues to be within American industrial life—as Michael Harrington, a member of the National Steering Committee of the NDC, skillfully explains in *Toward a Democratic Left.*

The New party is not now able to point to any significant national leaders, with the exception of Dr. Benjamin Spock. By contrast, in addition to those already mentioned, the NDC has a host of young, vital, nationally prominent leaders, as well as many well-known within constituent state and national groups. Besides Phillips, Bond, and Cashin, Congressman John Conyers and Tom Bradley of Los Angeles have accepted invitations to join the National Steering Committee. Albert Pena of Texas and Bert Corona of California are among its Spanish-speaking representatives. Sam Brown, leader of McCarthy's youth cadres, and David Borden, a co-leader of the Kennedy youth movement, are aboard. State leaders like Zolton Ferency of Michigan, Daniel Gaby of New Jersey, George Brown and Donald Edwards of California, and George Williams of Colorado identify with the NDC. Senators McCarthy, McGovern, and Kennedy are friendly.

But it is important to emphasize that the NDC is no man's political property. Its commitments are to values and issues; and it will actively work only for those who firmly support core commitments. The NDC means to be done with the kind of politics that makes loyalty to a candidate or a party take precedence over loyalty to moral commitments.

A SALIENT FACT in this discussion is that in those states where a deep wedge has already been driven into the base of established party power, Democratic insurgents will simply refuse a call to a New party. In California, Michigan, Wisconsin, New Mexico, New Hampshire, Washington, and Alabama, radical insurgents will not willingly squander what they have gained in recent months and years. Nor should they abandon gains agonizingly wrung from prevailing centers of power unless there is an absolutely decisive case in favor of doing so. Here we come to what many within the New party regard precisely their decisive claim. They argue that the Democratic party can never become sufficiently radical to cope with society's urgent needs. This is so because great concentrations of corporate power absolutely bar the way to radical change; and it is impossible to transform the existing system, within which the Democratic party is an integral component, in ways essential to mounting an effective assault on those centers of corporate power. New party advocates believe that those who think otherwise delude themselves.

While not clearly identified with the New party, Christopher Lasch has expressed an essential part of this analysis when he proclaimed that "as a social philosophy, liberalism is dead." He derives this remarkable conclusion from his assumption that liberalism's core values are "self-reliance, sexual self-discipline, ambition, acquisition, and accomplishment," which, he believes, "have come to be embodied in a social order resting on imperialism, elitism, racism, and inhuman acts of technological destruction." Having thus defined liberalism in terms of a certain kind of bourgeois culture, Lasch has little difficulty showing that liberalism, *so defined,* is incompetent to provide a philosophical

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basis for reconstructing that society. But his criticism succeeds only by ignoring what those who identify themselves as radical liberals are saying and doing.

Part of the explanation for this is the tendency of New party supporters to identify American liberalism with the Old Coalition that kept the Democratic party in power for some 35 years. Now Lasch, Raskin, and others are absolutely right when they claim that an Old Politics based on the Old Coalition has no chance of assaulting basic corporate power effectively. And they are also correct in claiming that unless corporate power is successfully challenged, radical change cannot be fashioned. So, if the choice between a New party and the Old Politics exhausts the possibilities, then those who are unwilling to lapse into political quiescence would have no choice but to try to build a New party whatever the odds.

But this argument begs the very point at issue; whether there is a viable, intermediate alternative. For from the legitimate claim that the Old Politics cannot succeed, it does not follow that a New Politics requires a New Party.

Quite the reverse. Consider the issue concretely. In order to make radical institutional change we shall have to master corporate behemoths like General Motors, AT&T, Boeing, the U.S. armed forces, and so on. Now how is one to bring these vast concentrations of corporate power under some kind of humane control? Sloganizing about revolution, guerrilla assaults, participatory democracy, or even "autonomous enclaves of socialism in the ghettos and elsewhere" (Lasch) will not do it. There is a need to gain control of the only concentration of corporate power that is greater and more legitimate than the ones inimical to liberal values: the federal government.

And if one acknowledges, as both Lasch and Raskin do, that revolutionary effort must fail; that to propose it now is a fraud or delusion, then there exists only one route to federal power: electoral activity.* Now I hope I have shown that in comparison with the NDC, the New party suffers enormous electoral disabilities. There is then little reason for going the New party route. It is not that New party people are too radical; they are not radical enough. Or more precisely, they abandon a *radicalism of aims* for the sake of a *radicalism of militancy*—a self-indulgence that those suffering the chronic evils of American life can ill afford. An authentic radicalism does not dismiss unpleasant institutional facts by wishing them away.

II

LET ME REMIND the reader of what I emphasized at the beginning. Working within the Democratic party is the principal part, but *only* a part, of a total strategy for radical change. Keeping this in mind, what is the New Coalition's optimal course?

The first and most important task is to build an organized, new coalition of forces within the Democratic party. The Old Coalition failed, and must fail, because it is unresponsive to emerging interests and concerns, and because the more powerful segments of the Old Coalition (especially the unions) have traditionally tended to use the electoral power of black Americans, Spanish-speaking Americans, poor whites, and other politically disabled groups rather than involving them as full partners and promoting their claims for justice.

The principle of participation based on balanced involvement in leadership must therefore be guaranteed. At the Minneapolis NDC meeting a plan of organization was accepted that gave minority caucuses the right to designate representatives of their own choice, and in what they acknowledged were adequate numbers, to the National Steering Committee. Again, a balance was struck among those who supported different candidates in the various primary campaigns, and who represent various constituency components of the New Coalition. At the first meeting of the Steering Committee, this approach was underlined by a resolution to guarantee that additional members will be designated from state organizations as they develop in a balanced way, and from national constitu-

* There are those who, like Stokely Carmichael and John Gerassi, wait for the oppressed in the Third World to throw off the shackles of economic imperialism, thereby plunging the American economy into collapse. The resulting disorder, they reason, will make it possible to mount an effective revolutionary movement. Quite independently of the morality of such a strategy, it is based on wish, not fact. In this connection Michael Harrington again offers a devastating critique. See chapters VII and VIII of his *Toward a Democratic Left.*

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ency groups like students, farmers, poor whites, and so on. These representatives are to be chosen, whenever feasible, by the groups themselves.

The Coalition must be organized at every relevant political level: municipal, state, and national. It is vital that any national effort be based solidly on grass-roots work in towns, cities, counties, Congressional districts, and states. For reasons I will develop in a moment, it would be unfortunate if NDC were to become a federation of principalities. It needs to be a truly *national* organization. But its prospects depend on its remaining in touch with, servicing, and helping to organize at grass-root levels. Basic as local organization is, the country needs urgently a potent national group dedicated to radical institutional change.

A national organization will provide the appropriate frame of organization for national constituency groups that have traditionally been denied effective power and participation in the Democratic party. These groups have interests that transcend geographic divisions. They range from liberal academicians who are sick of the ways in which our cultural and moral life are corrupted, to American Indians who eke out livings on reservations. They include Spanish-speaking Americans, members of the peace movement, clergymen who think that religion has more than a passing moral interest in chronic social ills, women who refuse to send their boys to fight in unjust wars, and so on. But two groups are particularly important components of the New Coalition: black Americans and college students.

Black Americans make up the largest oppressed segment of American society. Suffering the consequences *now* of a fantastically unjust distribution of resources, they cannot afford a politics of pure conscience and futuristic goals. Only the affluent can think and act exclusively in such terms. That is why black Americans voted by overwhelming majorities for Humphrey, despite profound reservations and distrust. That is why there is little reasonable basis for expecting them to act otherwise in the future.

By contrast student militants are often the materially secure offspring of prosperous parents. They know in their gut the spiritual impoverishment that certain forms of affluence breed. They seek to live an authentic life; lacking inhibiting investment in family and career, they are prepared to act on behalf of great moral issues without the barrier of prudent self-interest. Students, more than any others, can save us all from unwarranted accommodation for the sake of comfort and career. They constantly remind us how often material prosperity and social success can contaminate man's powers of critical thought.

There is a tension between the demands typically made, the vision typically expressed by black people and by militant students. It is a healthy tension, one that is essential for the New Coalition. The one reminds us that there is suffering here and now, that every sacrifice made for the sake of millenial aspirations is a sacrifice of *somebody*. The other reminds us that there exists a future moral prospect whose achievement depends on assaulting basic institutional structures, that if we focus too completely on the here and now we may squander the chances for a qualitatively better tomorrow. No social movement that fails to grapple with the tension embodied in these two forces can hope to retain both integrity and effectiveness.

Beyond the concern for involving militant students is the fact that 55 per cent of all high school graduates are going to college now. According to Lou Harris, this year the college educated account for 28 per cent of the electorate. In 1972 they will come to over 35 per cent, and by 1976 they will make up over 40 per cent of all voters. Basing his assessment on polling data, Harris claims,

> The mark of this affluent group is that it is committed to change. These dominantly white people are in favor of open housing, in favor of accommodation with the Communist nations and for compromise in Vietnam, and are highly tolerant of student, hippie, and antiwar demonstrators, as well as boys with long hair and girls with short skirts.

In brief, a conscience constituency based on the college educated will soon become a numerically potent segment of the voting public. Hence, college students must become an essential component of the NDC, not only because their relative degree of moral freedom is needed to keep us all honest, but also for the

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political reasons that they are large in numbers, energy, and potential resources.

To expand its national constituency, the New Coalition must maintain openings to Right and Left. And it must work vigorously to develop relations of trust and commitment among those who are only loosely, and suspiciously, tied to its organization and program. There are two intermeshing ways by which best to accomplish this task: community organization and political education.

One way of winning the trusting allegiance of the poor, the alienated, the racial minorities is by supporting and engaging in meaningful community action. A wildcat strike sparked by inhuman conditions of work, a grape boycott, or a Poor Peoples' campaign are all actions that result quite naturally from conditions of oppression. This means for the NDC not only programs and lobbying, not only electoral activity for candidates who care, but also direct action on picket lines, sit-ins, and mass demonstrations. We must be with those who compose our coalition in body as well as spirit. This is a lesson militant students have been learning. We should learn from them. Only if one is perceived as *caring* will he be trusted. And only if he actually *cares*, will he be perceived as caring. And only if one *acts* at some cost or risk to self when there is tactical justification for doing so, can one be sure that he really cares.

Political education should be an important part of everything we do. The National Steering Committee has established a National Priorities Committee charged with developing program, priorities, and research necessary to develop our case with reason and effectiveness. Potentially it has a vast human resource at its disposal: intellectuals and writers, but also the resources of sympathetic peace, civil liberties, and civil rights groups.

Of very great importance is the NDC's relationship to the trade union movement. Too many radicals are prepared to write the unions off as bastions of conservatism and reaction. No judgment could be less discriminating. One of NDC's co-chairmen, Paul Schrade, is an elected regional director for the UAW. He as well as hundreds of other trade-union leaders sympathize with our cause. For one thing, many unions were shaken by the amount of Wallace support within their membership. Though the tide was reversed, in large part because of unstinting trade-union efforts, they recognize that there is a vast third of the nation who are not poor yet have legitimate grievances that too few seem to care about. If the NDC can articulate the discontents of the "affluent poor," can develop programs of amelioration, can convince them that they are not the forgotten men of American political life, it can earn the support of many union members.

Finally, let me review the relationship between the NDC and the New party. Just as it is quite predictable that most people will not go the New party route, so it is certain that many will. Those who choose that road are generally good and dedicated people. A New party as a minor element in a broad strategy for change can serve positive functions. It would help keep many who will otherwise drop out relevant to the political process. It will provide an additional and salutary pressure from the Left. In some cases, as recently in my own community of Ann Arbor, it can put someone on the ballot when the major parties utterly fail to provide a reasonable choice of candidates. And it can, merely by existing and functioning, provide a fall-back position should the NDC's effort to work within The System fail.

From this perspective, the NDC should regard a relatively small New party—one that does not constitute an undue drain on potential membership and resources—as a potential ally when matters of common concern arise. The danger, and I really do not regard it as a significant one, is that a New party will drain away so many good and resourceful people that its prediction that the NDC must fail will be self-fulfilling. And if that happens, the darker forces of American life, not the New party, are bound to be the chief beneficiaries.

Can the New Democratic Coalition succeed? New party supporters do well to remind those of us committed to the other alternative that the effort will not be easy, and will not be completed in a day or a year. It will take many years, probably generations, of hard and diligent work. But we must not permit knowledge of the difficulties to breed despair that cuts the nerve of our effort. For the will to believe we can succeed is itself one of the important conditions of success.

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Irving Howe

And Now, God Help Us, Nixon

FIRST AN ADMISSION of error, and then a few analytical notes.

A few weeks before the Presidential election I began to recognize that I very much wanted Nixon defeated. That could only mean, Humphrey elected. I had written in DISSENT that I wouldn't vote for Humphrey unless he changed his stand on Vietnam; but by mid-October, watching both men campaign, I wanted Nixon defeated, period. I didn't like Humphrey any more than before, but given this choice I hadn't made in a world I hadn't made, I wanted Nixon defeated, period.

It was right to work for Eugene McCarthy, to fight Humphrey straight down to the nomination, and to keep criticizing Humphrey after he got the nomination. But when it came to the actual vote, there *was* a difference significant enough to require a choice. Millions of people will probably live somewhat worse under Nixon than they would have under Humphrey, and most of these millions are black. What I wrote in our last issue was, therefore, wrong. We must try to recognize the difference between a fundamental political commitment and a particular, often uncomfortable choice in the voting booth.

The Real World

IT WOULD also be good for those of us on the Left to conclude from the election that there's a difference between what goes on in our heads and what goes on in the world. What's more, we all live in small enclaves: the university, the peace movement, the union staff, the intellectual group. Unavoidably we tend to forget that our self-generated excitements and valid sentiments can blind us to gross realities.

Consider the recent talk about "black power"—the fascination expressed in some intellectual circles with violence, separatism, guerrilla warfare. But despite their virtual monopoly of intellectual attention and the vast amounts of time TV has given them, Floyd McKissick, Dick Gregory, Stokely Carmichael, Eldridge Cleaver, and Roy Innes had very little political influence. Of the millions of Negroes who voted, 90 per cent supported the Democratic party. Can we really suppose that those who didn't vote were heeding the "militant" call to boycott the election? Or is it more likely they were still trapped in traditional kinds of apathy? The "black militants" can create "confrontations," but so far their political influence among American Negroes remains very small.

Why does this matter? Because we ought to keep clear the difference between TV spectacle and social actuality, between *Ramparts* fantasy and what's happening in politics.

The Wallace Vote

SOME COMMENTATORS have dismissed the Wallace campaign as a failure because he got the 13 per cent which was his original goal rather than the 20 per cent the mid-October polls registered for him. I think these commentators are wrong. Any candidate who can poll close to 10 million votes—far, far more than a socialist or left-wing candidate has ever received in this country—must be reckoned a political power. Just possibly, Nixon owes his victory to Wallace. Probably, Wallace's showing will lead to a Southern Congressional bloc more aggressive than in the past and likely to exact stiff terms for cooperating with the conservative Republicans. Quite certainly, the Wallace movement will be in a position seriously to threaten future campaigns by national Democratic tickets.

Still, why did the Wallace support decline between mid-October and Election Day? For two parallel reasons, I'd say. Far-Right voters in places like Orange County, California, who might ordinarily have been tempted to vote for Wallace apparently concluded that it would be more realistic, from their point of view, to elect Nixon. And a good portion of those labor voters which had been drawn to Wallace were pulled back at the last minute by the exertions of an alarmed union leadership.

The mere fact that Wallace was "contained" in the North is not yet decisive. The true significance of his movement is as a threat for 1972. If the kinds of social disorder continue which "turn off" large sections of

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the white working and middle classes, it is possible that many of the people who in 1968 switched back to Humphrey will be ready in 1972 for an explosion of resentment and a vote for Wallace. And, in turn, if the Vietnam War drags out and the wretchedness of the ghettos is not sharply alleviated, the disorders of the past few years will continue.

Given the social immobilism Nixon represents, it could become a vicious circle.

Old Politics, New Politics

MOST OF THE TALK about Old and New Politics seems an oversimplification, though it cannot be doubted that changes are in process.

The Old Politics, if that's what you wish to call it, didn't do so badly—if you consider the handicaps it faced in defections from Right and Left, an unpopular war, a dubious candidate, a disastrous convention, etc. By and large, Negroes continued to support the liberal-labor coalition. The unions did a pretty effective—in Michigan, a quite remarkable—job of regathering their political strength. It is surely a delusion to suppose that the labor vote can be dismissed as a crumbling remnant of the past.

We don't yet have adequate statistics, but it would be important to know: the unionists drawn to Wallace, were they the same ones who have traditionally voted Republican? (About a third of the labor vote has always gone Republican.) Were they unionists who, on economic matters, would still be ready to support progressive measures—despite their susceptibility to racist appeals? Were they older or younger workers?

In any case, the contempt one frequently encountered among intellectuals when unions were mentioned was (to be polite) unwarranted. A friend wrote me in October: "Stop deluding yourself—the American workers are for Wallace." Now even at that point, when things were bad enough, this wasn't true. The polls showed trade-union support for Wallace to be only a trifle greater than middle-class support. And by Election Day this was significantly decreased.

The most urgent need in the coming months is for a series of unadvertised discussions meant to begin healing the split between the traditional bread-and-butter constituencies and the new "conscience" constituencies. To these, something like the following might be said:

•

Dear Trade Union Friends:

The educated middle class keeps growing in size and importance; your own children, whom you've worked so hard to get through college, are among them. Many of these people, active in the McCarthy campaign, are going to be important in American politics. They differ from you in style and rhetoric; they talk in relatively high-falutin ways and they show a regrettable indifference or ignorance about the economic issues on which you have concentrated. But for your own sake, you will have to learn to cooperate with them, even if only in limited ways. They have energy, money, idealism. They turn out lots of people to ring doorbells. You can grumble all you want about their attitude toward unions—which partly, after all, is your own fault—but these people are real and for keeps. They are raising issues that affect the whole country, issues that the unions have lamentably failed to consider or confront, and you'll have to find ways of relating what they say to what you say.

•

Dear Left-Liberal Friends:

Don't think those 15 million unionists are going to disappear overnight. They are a force, they have money, they have experience. Above all they're persistent: they can't retire on sabbaticals. You must recognize that if you want to achieve major gains, you must cooperate, even if in limited ways, with trade unions. On some issues, right now, that's impossible—e.g. Vietnam. There you will have to go your own way, as in the McCarthy campaign. But for an over-all politics in this country, that's just not enough. You must become more responsive to the needs and feelings of American workers; you must shake off the notion that they have all become affluent and complacent. And you might also recognize that some of your self-righteous moralism can be a swift pain. Politics doesn't require total agreement: it's possible to work together on some issues and not on others.

•

Above all, we must avoid like the plague the most terrible political danger of the years

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ahead: the danger of a new-style "confrontation" between white working class and middle class, on the one hand, and an alignment of high-minded intellectuals, "black militants," and student leftists on the oher hand. That would insure an all-but-permanent victory for the Right.

It would be silly to suppose that the fracture of the labor-liberal-Negro-intellectual alliance can be healed overnight. Perhaps it shouldn't even be healed too quickly, in order to make possible a new internal relationship of forces and a new understanding of issues. But long, intensive, patient discussions must begin, and with the common understanding that until a new alliance is gradually cemented we will be in for some very hard times.

Stanley Plastrik

Old Coalition, New Coalition

POST-ELECTION WISDOM is about as good as pre-election wisdom. Still, here goes: The old coalition is dead, long live the new! This seems to me the main point of the election results. True, in the last hours of the election, the old coalition—labor, Negroes, liberals, etc.—drew briefly together once more in an effort to put over Humphrey. But who can believe this was anything but a final flickering of an exhausted coalition? Like others, I cast a last-minute vote for Humphrey, justifying this reversal of an abstentionist position held in September by the halting of the Vietnam bombing plus a growing alarm at the prospect of Nixon. Certainly Humphrey himself had done little to earn my vote or anyone's for that matter: he ended his campaign as he had begun, in the seedy embrace of Mayor Daley (how ironic that precisely Illinois guaranteed loss of the election: Mayor Daley delivered *not*).

THE NEW COALITION—exactly what does that mean? The ingredients are there, but the mix has scarcely begun. This new movement will be difficult to construct. It will be headed by the new breed of liberal-radical Democrats (Senator George McGovern represents experience, Congressman Allard Lowenstein youth) who will fall heir to the party over the next decade. It will include regrouped remnants of the Old Coalition—the more progressive labor leadership, older liberal groups (ADA), moderate Negro leaders, etc. And most important, it will find its mass base in that new middle class (professionals, technicians, teachers, intellectuals, etc.) about whom Michael Harrington has written. The Democratic party, revamped of course, can be made into the vehicle of this new coalition, with a program for social and economic transformation. Such a Democratic party should be expected to become much more of a popular movement based upon individual membership rather than a conglomeration of county, district, and local machines controlled by some hack.

Surely, revitalization of the Democratic party makes more sense than "fourth party" and other sectarian ventures. Examine the black and Puerto Rican vote in and around New York and this conclusion is explicit. Nor should we fail to take into account that whole generation of youth below voting age who, by 1972, will become eligible voters: the McCarthyite youth. The warning addressed by Al Lowenstein to Senator McCarthy not to become involved in a "new party" effort seems highly pertinent.

What about the Nixon Administration? It has no mandate for reaction, not even for a consistent conservatism. There was no sharp rightward shift in this election: at most, middle-of-the-road moderatism has been given a slightly rightish tinge as compared to a slightly leftish one. This Administration will not shape events, it will react to them. And of events we shall have aplenty! We continue to live in revolutionary times, Mr. Nixon.

"For three minutes on Red Square I felt free. I am glad to take your three years for that."

—VADIM DELONE, *23-year-old student, upon being sentenced to prison for protesting the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia.*

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Carl Shier

On the Labor Front

Black and White, Unite—or Fight?

A FEW WEEKS before the Presidential election, the auto and steel plants in the Chicago area were flooded with leaflets soliciting support for George Wallace. Here is a paragraph from one of them:

> The Negro today is the best-treated human being in the U.S. He is the only person that can live without working. He can have illegitimate children, and can get by with it. He can have ten common-law wives, and nobody seems to care. He can get on the welfare program when good, honest, hard-working white people are unable to qualify. The government makes the rules for the welfare department, and just about every Negro can qualify. The government will set him up a brick building with steam heat, pay the housing project where he can live for very little rent, and go to the mail box once a month and get his welfare check. . . . Who's being mistreated?

Whether this represents a "spontaneous reaction," or is a clever manipulation of white sentiment by political operators, hardly matters. The point is that it skilfully combines an appeal to traditional race prejudices with a new-style appeal to white workers on the grounds that it is *they* who are now being discriminated against.

The pre-election polls showed heavy support for Wallace among unionized workers, though not necessarily more support than among certain segments of the white middle class. What was the basis of Wallace's appeal? I offer the following speculations:

• Old-fashioned prejudice, sometimes even racism, is still around. Maybe it's a bit less respectable to express it, but it's there. Some of the white workers have come up from the South within the last 20 or 25 years, and retain many of their old attitudes. In addition, most of the men now working in the plants don't have behind them the experience in militant unionism which made the UAW what it is; they are the *inheritors* of the struggle, not its initiators—a fact for which they aren't to be blamed, of course.

• White workers feel threatened—rationally or irrationally (mostly irrationally)—by the Negro upsurge. Seymour Lipset's analysis fits in with my own observations:

> Many of the unionized workers who are steadily employed, are purchasing their own homes in neighborhoods which are relatively close to expanding black areas, and are bothered by higher taxes, are beginning to oppose the welfare program as a system which taxes the hard-working to help the lazy and the unfit. To a considerable extent they identify these groups with the Negroes.
>
> Since white union members are much more likely to live inside the central cities than the more affluent middle class, they are also more directly and personally concerned with the problem of increased urban crime and with efforts at integrating urban school systems through modifying the concept of the neighborhood school. Many workers see the pressures for school desegregation as coming from the well-educated middle class which lives in the suburbs or sends its children to private schools. The issue for them has become one of the well-to-do forcing the white working class to send its children to school with black children.

Since I am writing this report for a magazine read by intellectuals, let me reinforce Lipset's last point. Why was Wallace's attack on "pseudo-intellectuals" so popular with his audiences? Because there is a strong feeling among white blue-collar workers that in regard to Negroes and schools the white middle class is guilty of pious hypocrisies. And don't suppose that these workers aren't shrewd and perceptive in their way, or that they don't catch on to the double-bookkeeping of affluent intellectuals who, say, denounce the teachers union in New York for damaging public education while they themselves abandoned public education for their own children years ago.

• The average white worker—if you can create such an abstraction—is troubled by riots and disorder. He has begun to dig in socially. He has his own little house, and he's worked damned hard to get it. He believes in the stability of the family as an institution. His kids are probably going to a municipal or state college, the first time that's ever happened in his family. He sees himself making a little prog-

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ress, and while he is ready to fight for more of it, and ready in the shop to join black workers for a mutual improvement of conditions, he looks upon riots as a threat to the whole way of life he has struggled for, a threat that may bring disaster to everyone. Is he entirely wrong?

• In the last few decades of prosperity, the unions got a little lazy and neglectful in the gruelling day-to-day job of education among the ranks. They failed to recognize that the blunt class appeal of the thirties, while still needed, was no longer enough, because there were new issues, more complex and troubling and not lending themselves to easy solutions.

II

ONCE THE NEWS of the polls got around, an enormous effort was made in the unions to cut down the Wallace support. Leaflets were distributed in large quantity, and far more important, the secondary union leadership in auto, steel, and rubber got down to some hard and effective work. Some of them, I suspect, may be victimized in local union elections next spring for having spoken up so strongly against Wallace.

The appeal of the unions was alright, as far as it went. They called upon the solidarity of the workers. They stressed the rotten labor record of Wallace, knowing that—paradox as it may seem—many of the workers who were swinging toward Wallace were also in favor of unions and progressive social legislation. (Wallace never attacked unions as such; his appeal was a kind of populist racism.) How many of the workers who had been inclined toward Wallace were won away by union efforts, I can't say with any precision—perhaps no one will ever know. But from my own experiences I can say that the unions, especially in Michigan, did an effective job in cutting the Alabama demagogue down to size. That doesn't mean, however, that what Wallace stands for doesn't retain considerable support in the plants or that the threat of increased support in case that riots continue isn't a real one.

III

THE PROCESS of "polarization," which some political children look on with pleasure, has been occurring on both extremes within the union. Every decent person understands, of course, that Negroes in general and Negro workers in particular have serious grievances. But in a given situation, racial separatism, for whatever reasons, can endanger the very existence of a union. A few examples:

• At the convention of the steel workers' union, held this past fall, a bloc of Negro delegates proposed that a certain number of posts in the union's leadership be automatically put aside for blacks. By a voice vote the convention rejected this idea.

Now, in the UAW this issue had been debated a long time ago, at the 1943 Buffalo convention and then at the 1949 Milwaukee convention. In both instances rank-and-file blacks attacked the union for not having representation on the policy-making level; in both instances black leaders spoke of the need for being elected on the basis of individual merit and not race. A step forward was taken when a Negro unionist, Jack Edwards, was elected to the International Board of the UAW, not as a representative of blacks but as part of the whole union leadership. A much bigger step forward was taken this year when, for the first time in UAW history a Negro unionist, Marcellius Ivory, was elected Regional Director in the Detroit region which includes the huge Ford River Rouge plant. And it should be noted, this is a region in which the majority of UAW members is white.

So it would seem that, while the internal racial problems of the UAW are by no means solved, it does set a useful precedent for how to achieve growing influence of black union-

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ists without sliding into the dangers of black separatism.

In the steel workers' union there have recently been some important steps in this direction. Three new staff representatives, a member of the education department, several other full-time workers—all black—have been added. More important, in the forthcoming union elections it seems likely that the Baltimore district No. 8 will send a black steel unionist, Lee Simms, as its representative to the Executive Board.

• Within the UAW itself there have been troubles. At the Dodge Hamtranck plant there appeared a while ago a black group calling itself the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement. Black nationalist in outlook, it put out a paper called DRUM which appealed to black workers along "hate Whitey" lines. It succeeded in organizing a couple of wildcats on a racial basis. DRUM also attacked Negro workers who hold elective or appointive positions in the union as "Uncle Toms" (the easiest kind of smear these days). In reply to DRUM, the Dodge Local 3 officers, regional director, and the director of the Chrysler department issued an open letter to the ranks entitled "Common Sense—or Chaos?" Here are some quotes:

> Not every picket line is a Union picket line. . . . It is important for you to know and understand that these picket lines are not UAW picket lines. Legal picket lines of the UAW can be established only after strikable grievances have gone through the grievance procedure. *A democratic vote must be taken in which ALL members of the local are able to participate.* . . . To put it mildly, DRUM leaflets are extremist hate sheets. The object is to pit white workers against black workers and even black against black.

In the last few months DRUM has subsided. Within the UAW there has developed a black caucus of active unionists, led by such veteran fighters as Buddy Battle III, who are pressing for the legitimate claims of the black workers without succumbing to separatism.

• In other mid-Western unions there have been similar developments. One of the most important occurred in Division 241 of the Amalgamated Transit Union in Chicago. The black bus drivers had legitimate grievances against the local leadership, charging discrimination and favoritism. They formed a group called the Concerned Transit Workers, and for a time had some support among white members of their union. When the CTW led a strike and it came to seem, no doubt unfairly, that the main issue was a black effort to take over the union, white support melted away. After a second strike, the bulk of the black workers returned to the job but the leaders were fired. At that point there began to be talk about setting up a new black union—and the aggrieved blacks made the mistake of turning for advice not to experienced black unionists but to religionists who have little understanding of what can or can't be done in unions. Similar defeats have been suffered by black workers at a Hotpoint plant who are covered by the Sheet Metal Workers' Union and who talked about forming a separate black local.

• There's just no easy way out of some of these difficulties. But one thing is clear, and all the experience of American unionism supports this: trying to set up a dual union based on race is a sure way to disaster. The black workers in all these situations had real complaints, and what they should have done was to consult with black unionists in other unions who had learned how to make their weight felt and get union leadership to be responsive. A caucus of black workers pressing for improvements but at the same time making it clear that it means to remain in the union seems the best way out.

Threatened on one side by the racist and semiracist rumblings of Wallace supporters, and challenged on the other side by black workers who in their understandable anger sometime succumb to a form of black nationalism that can slip into anti-unionism, we in the trade-union movement are going to have our hands full these next few years. The election of Nixon isn't going to help—and neither, I might add, will the snobbish contempt and plain ignorance which some intellectuals favor these days toward unionism. But if unions are to survive in this country at all, we will have to find ways, in the day-to-day unglamorous life of the white and black workers, of creating the kind of solidarity which only a few decades ago gave birth to industrial unionism.

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Henry Pachter

The Nixon Regime And Foreign Policy

READING Robert Kennedy's posthumous account of the momentous Cuban confrontation, I felt a shudder descending my spine. Realizing that the story hinged on the question whether to drive Khrushchev harder or to give him room for maneuver, I could not help wondering with anxiety: what might have happened if, instead of the Kennedys, Richard Nixon had come to that same crossroads? Would he have been as careful as Kennedy to avoid a head-on collision, as accommodating in victory, as prudent not to drive his adversary to despair? I could not help but answer: for all we know about Nixon, he might have felt the need to prove himself; he might have been tempted to exploit the superiority of his forces to a point where his opponent would no longer have been able to control his own need to stand up to the enemy (us). Nixon might either have panicked or not have given his opponent enough time for retreat.

I was led to fear the worst because I had listened to Nixon's acceptance speech at Miami, ending with that sticky story of the little boy who rose to high places through his virtuous efforts and thanks to a benevolent system. It was not the corniness of this story that made me nauseous, but the idea of a potential President who still wonders how he got there! Can Horatio Alger be trusted to understand that this mighty force is to be used only for the sole purpose of avoiding its use?

The question became even more horrifying when I remembered a debate among DISSENT contributors after the Cuban missile crisis. I had suggested that, regrettably, we could not say peace had been saved by the protest marches of our friends the world over, but had to admit, ever so sadly, that peace had been saved by the judicious application of deterrent power. Erich Fromm replied that pacifists must forbid themselves such thoughts. He argued that my view was like saying hot rodders had saved their lives through ruthlessness, because they had not crashed into each other. I felt the simile was ill-chosen because if one hot rodder has a tank and the other merely a car, the chances are that the latter will have to yield. Until recently American superiority indeed was able to deter Russian expansionism in those areas where the U.S. is defending its own and allied interests. But recently we have been advised that the Soviet nuclear establishment either has achieved parity with the U.S. in significant areas or will attain parity in the near future. Deterrence has become much more mutual than it used to be in Kennedy's day. Hence the Kremlin is more likely to raise its demands above the level Khrushchev felt safe to operate on, and the Kremlin is now less likely to be contained within boundaries Khrushchev felt constrained to respect. We know the Russians make it a practice to "test" each new American President. All too soon Mr. Nixon may find himself confronted with the dilemma of either "standing up to pressure" or losing the credibility of our own deterrent. In the international poker game, our man is likely to have a weaker hand and to be less sure of himself—a man who is not sure of himself is always inclined to bluff, and the game of poker is threatening to become Russian roulette. Or to return to Erich Fromm's simile: he may now be more right than he was in 1963 that it will be pure accident if we survive the next international crisis. If both contestants have the same type of hot-rod car, neither is likely to yield.

Unfortunately, the chances are even less propitious because at the same time the Soviet Union has acquired leaders who, according to all available evidence, are small, petty, anxiety-ridden, and (as the Czech coup showed) ruled by panic rather than being rulers by confidence. There is nothing more dangerous in international politics than two such opposing teams of clever cowards each reciprocating the other's tactical moves, and each determined by the irresistible pull of day-to-day advantages. It is to be feared that neither will be thinking in terms of preserving the security of the "system of states" (which permits de-escalation of the arms race), because each will feel compelled to think in terms of his separate security (which "requires" not only escalation of the arms race but also a multiplication of conflict situations).

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II

THERE ARE NOW on the drawing boards, or in various stages of testing, perfecting, and manufacturing, terrible new weapons which signify much more than an increase in the firing power of atomic weapons. They penetrate all thinkable defenses; they destroy lives and living conditions beyond anything that until recently the most reckless militarist could term an "acceptable risk." After the ICBMs whose approach still is detectable and the ABMs whose deployment converts the second-strike deterrent into a potential first-strike offensive system, we now have the MIRVs (Multiple Individually-Targeted Reentry Vehicles) which make havoc of defensive systems, the FOBS (Fractional Orbit Bombardment Systems) whose approach no longer can be detected in time for defensive measures to be taken, and the MOBS (Multiple Orbit Bombardment System), which soon may be hovering over our heads ready to be released—or maybe we shall see these deadly instruments chasing each other in space.

Moreover, as Professor Brzezinski has pointed out (*Encounter,* November 1968), for the first time in history the intercontinental and space forces of the two super-powers will "overlap, criss-cross, float side by side and rub shoulders. . . . In the past, imperial systems were territorially confined; overlapping fluid or mobile imperial power is new. The present international system seems ill-equipped for containing it." Indeed, the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 did not lead to war because Khrushchev finally recognized U.S. hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. But in the future, crisis situations that can be described in terms of the 1962 confrontation will be rarer. This will be so partly, as we have shown, because the Soviet military are likely to be more conscious of their strength and the Soviet leaders more aggressive in exploiting the new equation; partly because the new weapons and also some of the more conventional forces are now locked in power tests, crisscrossing all oceans and continents; finally, because the much overpraised "dissolution of the blocs" has added more anarchy to the free-for-all of international power contests.

A third adverse development is that the minor partners and the Third World no longer can be controlled; their wars provide opportunities which reckless tacticians of the big powers cannot resist. The emergence of the Soviet Union as a Near Eastern and Mediterranean power after the third Arab-Israeli war should be a lesson to ponder.

III

UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, Mr. Nixon might be tempted to renew the Cold War strategy. Such an attempt is likely to lead to a double disaster; it is bound to lead to further escalation of all conflict situations and of the arms race; it also is likely to fail in terms of welding a firmer NATO coalition. It will lead to the most vicious kind of isolation—a belligerent, interventionist reliance on a stronger military establishment. The Soviets have good reasons to remember now Mr. Johnson's offers to negotiate a mutual renunciation of ABM systems! We may see more polarization, even though the blocs may be disintegrating.

In this situation we must guard against a familiar illusion. We on the Left have been critical of the blocs, and therefore some of us have welcomed the spread of "neutralism." One shrinks back from the concept of threatening polarization and is tempted to substitute for it the concept of an emerging "Third World." But unfortunately, this conception is as illusory as it is barren; instead of a better organized community of nations, it offers us more anarchy. While not negating the polarization of the big powers, it also threatens to open a Pandora's box of secondary conflicts. Before the era of the world wars, international anarchy was mitigated—and to a certain extent controlled—by the "system of states" that maintained a certain equilibrium and in emergency situations formed a "concert of powers." The system came apart twice because blocs were formed that failed to maintain a "balance," or because the defenders of the status quo failed to contain the dynamic challengers, the "proletarian nations" or international rebels. In the postwar situation the stronger and more conservative bloc did, for over 20 years, contain the weaker but more dynamic bloc; but the growing strength of the latter and the waning unity of the former now seem to have brought us to the end of this "system" or equilibrium. Containment has

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succeeded, but it no longer succeeds. Deterrence did a job, but it will not give the same assurance in the future. To replace the old system of blocs we clearly need a new system, but not the lack of one!

I may have to add a word of warning to some friends on the Left. The idea behind neutralism and isolationism is that we need no "system" if each nation sticks to its knitting, refrains from interfering in areas where it has no business, and foregoes the opportunity to form profitable alliances. Such assumptions are not just unrealistic, they are plain nonsense. No one in his right mind would expect a similar asceticism from, say, a labor union or, for that matter, an academic institution, or even from a church. The only place where nice behavior is rewarded by good notes is the nursery school. Exhortation may be a supplement to policy, but it can never be a substitute for it. Unfortunately, the Third World is neither united nor powerful enough to bring moral pressure to bear on the imperialist powers. To boot, their own conduct has deprived the small nations of the right to talk morality with conviction.

IV

IT IS EVEN more unfortunate that another solution, as suggestive as it is simple, must be discarded as unrealistic. Many clever men have urged that the U.S. should offer the U.S.S.R. an alliance against Communist China, or that both superpowers should operate on the tacitly agreed-upon theory that sooner or later they may find themselves aligned against a combination of ultra-red, black and yellow danger. Such a conception, it seems, would automatically eliminate the pernicious competition between the two present superpowers.

Not so. To stay ahead of China in the arms race, the superpowers will have to escalate their own atomic and missile capabilities, and they would have to do so in competition with each other. But in any case, it is impossible to decide arbitrarily which is your enemy. At present, China is no threat to either the U.S. or the U.S.S.R., while these two powers clash in many places. Each certainly considers China a thorn in the other's side, yet they are unlikely to co-operate against her. And even if they were to observe a tacit understanding on the Chinese Threat, that would not be sufficient reason to bury their rivalry in other areas.

Ultimately, peace cannot survive unless the two superpowers agree to de-escalate their rivalries and to decelerate the race for arms superiority. Whether this is to be done through bilateral approaches, through the mediating efforts of third parties, in the framework of a high-level conference, or through international organizations is a practical matter. The essential thing is that such negotiations take place and that they deal with the substance of the matter: arms control, delineation of interests, settlement of territorial claims, security arrangements, defusing of incendiary disputes among third parties and satellite countries, etc.

In his acceptance speech Nixon recognized that the era of confrontation has come to a close and the era of negotiation is beginning. This may be either an understatement or an overstatement. Negotiations, of course, have been going on all the time. On the other hand, there is no indication yet that Mr. Nixon is prepared to negotiate in any sense differing from what has been going on all the time. He has said specifically that before we enter into meaningful negotiations we must first strengthen NATO.

By that time, it may be too late, Mr. Nixon! If each side must wait for negotiations until he can negotiate from strength, then neither will negotiate for the purpose of avoiding the kind of escalation that may make all future negotiations meaningless.

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Thomas R. Brooks

Tragedy at Ocean Hill

Last summer we invited Thomas R. Brooks, an experienced labor reporter, to write an article on the festering conflicts in the New York City school system, especially those in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district. Naturally, this article was transformed into a report on the teachers' strike and its ramifications. No event in recent history has so embittered and divided the people of New York, and this division has also shown itself among the intellectuals, within the union movement, and on the Left. Mr. Brooks's article strikes us as an honest and competent account of an enormously complicated event; no doubt, some of our readers will disagree with it. Since the issues raised here are both urgent and difficult, we invite comment from various points of view. We promise to print as many communications as space permits, asking only that these be reasoned arguments briefly presented.—ED.

OF COURSE, one wishes that the 1968 New York teachers' strike had not happened. The social fabric of the city was severely tried and suffered grievous wounds. Reconciliation is to be hoped for, but I fear it is unlikely, pretty much for the same reasons that made the strike all but inevitable. Still, there is no need to repeat history in quite the same dismal fashion, here or elsewhere. So, one attempts analysis. Perhaps the tragic conflict of the last few months will yield some measure of understanding.

Instant liberalism has already produced an explanation for the strike—"white teachers' racism." Jimmy Breslin, Nat Hentoff, Murray Kempton, and James Wechsler have all chimed in. In the November 1968 issue of *Ramparts*, Sol Stern huffs: "Caught in the cross fire of rising demands from the black ghettos in which they work, and confronted with the necessity of adaptation to black authority, white middle-class New York teachers may quietly vote for George Wallace."

Since so few New Yorkers wore Wallace buttons or voted for him, and since we could not follow teachers into the voting booths, we cannot really tell how teachers voted. Or can we? In the interest of stressing the complexities of human conflict, I report that a goodly number of teachers divided their time between picketing and campaigning hard for Paul O'Dwyer. In my own neighborhood school (P.S. 29 in Brooklyn; 80–90 per cent Puerto Rican, 10 per cent "others"), where the UFT chapter vote was 35 for and 10 against authorizing the strike, there were good teachers on both sides.[1] In another district, a UFT member, disagreeing with the strike, went in. But what other teachers on the job had to say about their striking fellows upset her so much that she fled home,

[1] The teachers and most of the parents at P.S. 29 wanted above all to maintain the good relationship that has made the school a fairly decent one. But middle-aged and middle-class white "New Leftists" assumed that they could manipulate the Spanish-speaking community into opening the school; set parent (preferably Puerto Rican) against parent (preferably white), teacher against teacher, and presumably everybody against the principal who has enjoyed both the confidence of his staff and that of the community. As one very middle-class "militant" put it when she was asked if she thought that the parents of P.S. 29's children wanted decentralization, "Why, we are doing it for *them*."

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crying. For the rest of the strike she neither worked nor picketed.

Despite one widely disseminated charge —"What the [Ocean Hill-Brownsville] Governing Board found wanting in these teachers [the 19 whose dismissal set off the conflict] was a genuine desire to teach the children . . ."—there were good teachers among the 19. I can't vouch for all of them, but one was so warmly greeted by a pupil on her return that she was reprimanded by a supervisor for being "overly demonstrative." Another "fired" teacher was one of the two chosen earlier as the best in the district for a TV filming of the experiment. Rhody McCoy, the administrator of the experimental district, told me in December 1967 of his pride in the way the teachers, specifically including the UFT teachers, accepted his appointees as principals. In my interviews with teachers then and since I found admiration for William Harris, principal of J.H.S. 271, and dislike for another man at another school. One was judged capable of handling his job, the other not. The judgment was professional and based on experience; it was not based on race or other extraneous factors. Also contrary to received liberal opinion, the UFT teachers in Ocean Hill-Brownsville initially were not unfavorably disposed toward McCoy.

INDEED, IT WAS THE UFT that brought decentralization to Ocean Hill-Brownsville, a grim, run-down corner of Brooklyn. With roughly 8,000 pupils—75–80 per cent Puerto Rican with a sprinkling of "others"—in five elementary schools (kindergarten through fourth grade) and two intermediate schools (fifth through eighth grade), Ocean Hill-Brownsville is one of three experimental districts set up with an assist from the Ford Foundation. The other two districts are: I.S. 201 which comprises 3,813 pupils—mostly black but with a substantial Puerto Rican minority—with four feeder schools (kindergarten through fourth grade) and intermediate school I.S. 201 in East Harlem; Two Bridges which comprises 5,148 pupils—40 per cent Puerto Rican, 36 per cent Chinese, and 12 per cent black—with four feeder schools and a junior high school on the Lower East Side.

Decentralization and community control by now are loaded political catchwords, lacking precise definition. How they came to be that way is a story of frustration and anger, a consequence of fruitless attempts to get action from the circumlocution office that passes for a Board of Education in New York City. As a result of the Board's betrayal of promises to integrate their new school, I.S. 201, parents voiced demands for "quality segregated education" and for a black principal. The Board, however, opened the school with a white principal, then transferred him out, precipitating a walkout of black and white teachers in protest. The "community" attacked both the teachers and the Board, even though the teachers had something of a case and the Board did not. Subsequently, a black woman was named acting principal, and last year the I.S. 201 Governing Board named Ronald Evans to fill the spot.

Meanwhile, agitation for a larger parental voice in the affairs of the school mounted. The Board cautiously announced its desire "to experiment with varying forms of decentralization and community involvement in several experimental districts of varying sizes." An I.S. 201 group, including David Spencer, the president of the Parents' Association and an aggressive young social worker on the staff of MEND (an antipoverty agency), met with two educational consultants from Yeshiva University, Sol Gordon and Harry Gottesfeld. They insisted on involving the UFT, and the first of the decentralization plans evolved.

The plan called for a two-year program. It provided for a governing board composed of ten parents and five teachers (one from each school) to be elected by parents and teachers respectively; five community repre-

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sentatives were to be selected by the parent members; and a representative by the supervisors. After training, the board would select a full-time administrator to hire and fire teachers and to set educational goals. The elementary schools were to become a part of the More Effective Schools (MES) program, which was sponsored by the UFT and in effect in 21 other schools throughout the city. Yeshiva University, as consultant, would set up a learning center for youngsters with reading problems and a learning laboratory to examine the educational problems of slum children.

Since the Board would have had to underwrite the expansion of the MES program into experimental districts, it balked. As Professor Gordon told me, "The Board made it clear that it would not come up with the money necessary to implement our educational plans." The reason was economic: *per-pupil cost in the UFT-sponsored MES schools is roughly* $915 *as against the estimated city-wide average of* $485. The Board dangled the prospects of "community involvement" before the parents and community activists, saying in effect, "If you don't play our way, no game." The UFT fought for the educational advantages and lost. Community activists, however, were eager for control almost on any terms.

The role of the Ford Foundation, at this point, is unclear. But it apparently put up little or no fight for MES, although it came up with roughly $173,000 for "planning" in each of the three districts.

The creation of the Two Bridges district illustrates the manipulative approach of the Ford Foundation. Over the summer of 1967, the parents of the Two Bridges schools participated in the successful fight to name Dr. Elliot Shapiro superintendent of District Three. Understandably, they were eager to reap the benefits of that struggle. At the same time, however, the Two Bridges Neighborhood Council ran out of funds for several of its antipoverty and educational projects. Requests for refunding were turned down by the Ford Foundation: "We're not interested in that anymore." However, said a Ford man, "If you're interested in school decentralization, we might do something for you." The money was quickly taken, and the parents in the area have been deeply and bitterly divided ever since. The Governing Board of Two Bridges, coincidentally, wound up in the hands of the very same people who took Ford money to educate and prepare the community for decentralization.

Within all three districts parents and teachers fought, often bitterly, over the "how" of the experiment. Teachers were divided. The UFT leadership tended to view the boards as potential employers and therefore held that teachers ought not to sit on boards as members. However, Some UFT chapters in the experimental districts did elect representatives to sit on the new boards, while other chapters refused all along to do so. Some teachers cooperated with the parents until they could no longer take the verbal abuse, and then quit. Others still cooperate, despite conflict. A sizable minority of the union continues to disagree with the course taken by the majority on this matter.

The teachers' disenchantment with the "experiments" was reinforced by their experience with the governing boards during the 1967 two-week contract strike.[2] Some of the teachers active in the planning for the experiments hoped that the parents would back the UFT in its negotiations with the Board of Education since several key demands were aimed at improving education—expansion of the MES program, smaller classes, and the like. Ironically, one of the demands turned down by the Board was a UFT proposal for a public review board to hear parental complaints against the teachers. The UFT be-

[2] Not all the governing boards were fully formed at this time. Since, however, the planning committees for promoting decentralization, funded by Ford, by and large became the governing boards, I believe I am justified in treating them as continuing bodies.

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lieved—and still believes—that such a review board would provide due process for teachers, enable parents to air their grievances, and enable the system to rid itself of incompetents. The parents, however, refused to give their backing. Like most parents, they did not like school strikes, which are especially hard on working parents who need the schools not only to educate their children but to watch over them while they are at work. Parents also tended to blame the UFT for going on strike rather than blame Mayor Lindsay for his ineptness. (The Mayor, after all, could have forced talks to proceed at a more intense pace much earlier in the summer. But he apparently thought the teachers would follow his advice to remain in school rather than pursue their own self-interest as teachers and trade unionists. Neither the parents nor the Mayor is very strong on labor relations.)

Behind the natural inclination of the parents toward disapproval, however, there is some evidence of social-worker manipulation pushing experimental district boards into a hard line against the strike. In Two Bridges, for example, staff members of the Parent Development Program,[3] an antipoverty agency training parents for para-professional tasks in the schools, issued a leaflet in the name of community parents that viciously attacked the teachers for striking. The leaflet was later withdrawn since its social-worker authors had not bothered to consult with the parents.[4]

THE THREE EXPERIMENTAL DISTRICTS were the locus of the only serious attempts at union-busting during the contract walkout. They were not successful, despite the urgings of the antipoverty warriors. For example, only a minority of the three districts' black teachers crossed picket lines, and attempts at running classes with parents failed, as they did elsewhere in the city. A certain lasting bitterness, however, was engendered. The UFT, for its part, made a major blunder when it demanded that the teachers be given the right to oust "disruptive children" from their classes. Black militants immediately charged that the demand was aimed at black children. The UFT subsequently proposed an eminently sensible and fair solution to an admittedly difficult problem. Even Murray Kempton, who has been close to hysteria in his denunciations of the UFT, had praise for its proposal, although he found a tortured reason for condemning the union because it acknowledged a mistake and corrected its error. Unfortunately the so-called disruptive child issue did poison the atmosphere. Within the decentralized districts, governing board members vowed vengeance. I.S. 201 teachers who participated in the walkout were told that they would face an "in-depth screening" on their return to work. An appeal by UFT president Albert Shanker averted a mass walkout of 490 teachers in Ocean Hill-Brownsville at the end of the contract strike.

When I looked into the three districts for *The Reporter* last winter, it seemed to me that most of the people involved were attempting to cool the passions created by past controversy. When the new I.S. 55 opened in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, teachers were relieved to find that Herman Ferguson, a militant separatist who had been indicted and subsequently convicted for plotting the murder of Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, Jr., and others, would not be principal. Ferguson's

[3] PDP is a daughter agency of the Two Bridges Neighborhood Council. It participated in training parents for the local governing board and its "candidates" are a majority on the board.

[4] The antipoverty agencies, by the way, are Lindsay's major source of patronage, and sometimes his way of buying off black militants. The anti-union role of these agencies became clearer still during the 1968 strike. A memo sent out by the Council Against Poverty (the central city antipoverty agency), headed by Major Owens, a Lindsay appointee and well-known black militant, urged affiliated agencies to do all they could to open the schools and suggested concrete ways of doing so. In short, while the Lindsay Board of Education ordered schools to be open, they actually counted on the poverty workers to force them open in their respective neighborhoods.

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role as adviser to the decentralization project and his expressed hostility to whites profoundly disturbed the teachers. His departure eased tensions, and there was, in fact, a fall-off in "community" attacks on the UFT and the teachers in the district.

Ironically, as it turned out, McCoy told me, "We have no intention of screening teachers. We will exercise the same prerogatives that superintendents and principals have at any other school in the city of New York [in appraising teacher performance]. We'll see to it that they are transferred out [if warranted] *only after due process*" (my italics). The teachers, in turn, were pleasantly surprised by McCoy's appointment of one Puerto Rican, one white, and three blacks as principals of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville schools.[5] Two were selected for praise in an article on decentralization by Eugenia Kemble in the *United Teacher*. When David Lee, principal of P.S. 178 in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, could not get the Board of Education to remedy physical defects in his school, UFT president Albert Shanker wrote a letter to the Board and made it public as a means of exerting pressure for the needed repairs.

McCoy is a warm, likable man. Evidently anxious to do a good job, he was at the time I interviewed him an exceedingly frustrated man. He needed, I suspect, a substantial gain, a major educational accomplishment, to demonstrate that the project was working—and to head off the extremists on his flanks. But he was frustrated, in part, by the hostilities between his staff and the Governing Board following the September 1967 strike (hostilities that he had, with UFT support, succeeded in cooling somewhat) and by lack of support from the Board of Education, from which all things still flowed.

Here's how McCoy described the situation to me last winter (December 1967):

> For three months, we've been in a state of persistent anxiety. We've got all the ingredients for a meaningful change right here in this District. But the question is, how much longer do you expect these people to string along? The faculty asks, where are the innovations, the new curriculum? But I'm not the local government. Every dime was spent before we came into existence. I'm not saying that decentralization means more money, but it does mean control over money. If the money is controlled already, we're not decentralized.

By spring, the situation worsened. In *The Burden of Blame,* a report on the Ocean Hill-Brownsville controvery put out by the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) on October 9, 1968, the UFT was charged

> escalation of rhetoric, [which] exposed the deep fears and hostility that existed between the white middle-class educational establishment and the black community. The community began to accuse the teachers of scuttling the experiment, and the teachers, having resigned from the Local Governing Board, began to talk about black extremists and black racism.

That is the accepted view among liberals. However, the truth is something else again and a good deal more complicated. As Maurice Goldbloom points out in a critique of the NYCLU report distributed by the Ad Hoc Committee to Defend the Right to Teach,[6] the activities of the "extremists" and "militants" "had become a serious problem well before the establishment of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district."

In May 1967, the preceding year, Robert

[5] Of the district's 18 assistant principals (all white) however, 17 requested transfers in protest. Some, no doubt, were angered at being passed over. Their organization challenged the appointments in court, charging that the new principals, drawn from state certification lists but not on New York City's civil service list, were not qualified. The courts have so far held the appointments illegal.

[6] The Ad Hoc Committee is chaired by Tom Kahn and Michael Harrington. It issued a statement upholding the right to teach, and in support of the UFT's struggle for due process for teachers under decentralization. I was among the signers, and if that indicates a bias, let it here be acknowledged.

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"Sonny" Carson of Brooklyn CORE had announced that he considered the five principals in the area "fired" and demanded that at least half of the teachers in the area be black. Demonstrations were held to enforce this demand. At that time, threatening and racist literature began to crop up in teachers' letter boxes and has reappeared off and on since.

The tenor of this scurrilous stuff may be gleaned from the following quote from several handbills:

> Get off our backs, or your relatives in the Middle East will find themselves giving benefits to raise money to help you out from under the terrible weight of an enraged black community. . . . [This, from another handbill:] It is impossible for the Middle East murderers of colored people to possibly bring to this important task the insight, the concern, the exposing of the truth that is a must if the years of brain washing and self-hatred that has been taught to our black children by those blood-sucking exploiters and murderers is to be overcome.

The handbills cropped up again last spring. The UFT offered the use of resource people to help in the development of special programs, but they were never called on.[7] As Fred Nauman, UFT chapter chairman, explains this period, "The meetings seemed at first to be fruitful but as the months passed we noticed that while some of our suggestions were well received, nothing seemed to be done with them."

Significantly, in the spring of 1968, Leslie Campbell, vice-president of the Afro-American Teachers' Association,[8] was transferred to I.S. 271, the center of much of the controversy this year. He helped to polarize the situation in Ocean Hill-Brownsville. As the final speaker at a school assembly following the murder of Martin Luther King, Campbell whipped up the already aroused, deeply disturbed students with cries, "Don't steal toothpaste and combs, steal things we can use. You know what I mean, brothers. . . . When the enemy taps you on the shoulder, send him to the cemetery. You know who your enemy is." (This for twelve- to fifteen-year-olds!)

Can we describe this as the UFT, to quote the New York Civil Liberties Union's statement, fanning "the flames of social fears" as it increasingly harped on "extremism," the "militants," and "black power"? After Campbell's speech, bands of youths roamed the school's corridors. Three teachers were attacked; one was taken to the hospital with a concussion.

The district was shut down for several days. Understandably disturbed, the UFT leaders in the district met with McCoy to explain the problem and seek ways of preventing repetition of such provocative acts. McCoy said that any action would have to be taken by the Governing Board and that he would arrange a meeting. Later, he said such a meeting was not possible.

A BRIEF RESPITE. Then, on May 9, midmorning, registered letters were delivered to 19 teachers and administrators on their jobs, stating: "The Governing Board of Ocean Hill-Brownsville Demonstration School district has voted to *end your employment* in the schools of this District. . . . *This termination of employment* is to take

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[7] The UFT District Chapter also urged that the principals named by McCoy be retained despite the court decision holding the appointments illegal. A letter urging this was signed by almost every member and sent to the Board of Education in March 1968.

[8] Herman Ferguson is a leader of this group. It was the ATA *Forum* that carried the now famous, or notorious, article by John F. Hatchett, then a school teacher and subsequently head of New York University's Martin Luther King, Jr., Center, entitled "The Phenomenon of the Anti-Black Jews and the Black Anglo-Saxon." Hatchett was fired by NYU for calling Shanker and Hubert Humphrey "racist bastards." When a group of us from the Ad Hoc Committee responded to an invitation from Dr. Kenneth Clark to meet Rhody McCoy and the Reverend C. Herbert Oliver, chairman of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Governing Board, it was Hatchett who appeared as McCoy's "second."

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effect immediately" (italics added). No reasons were given for the firings in the letters. Subsequently, McCoy said, "They were suspected of trying to sabotage the demonstration project." Other reasons were advanced at various times to different reporters—discriminating between Puerto Rican and Negro children, endangering the safety of the children, inability to maintain order, etc. Not one of the charges was ever supported by evidence. As a New York Urban League advertisement put it, "What the governing board found wanting in these teachers was a genuine desire to teach the children in their charge. . . . *And it is a very difficult charge to prove in a court of law. How do you document a sneer? How do you prove a tone of voice? How many witnesses are needed to convict teachers of the failure to love their children?"*

How indeed! Professionals may well ask themselves how you *disprove* such charges. The UFT properly insisted that the 19 (10 teachers, 9 administrators) be reinstated, or that charges be filed. It is important to note that there was a minority on the governing board who thought the teachers should have a hearing.

Much has been made of the last sentence in the letter the dismissed 19 received, which reads: "You will report Friday morning to Personnel, 110 Livingston Street, Brooklyn [the home of New York City's central Board of Education], for reassignment." The 19, it is now said, were merely transferred, not fired. Yet, "Personnel" knew nothing about "reassignment" and had no jobs for the "transferred" teachers. Voluntary transfers within the system may be arranged under specified conditions aimed at keeping transfers out of "bad" schools at a minimum. The Superintendent of Schools may make "involuntary," i.e. punitive transfers—but only with due process.

The evidence is that the Governing Board not only did seek either the dismissal or punitive transfer of the 19 but knew all along that what it was doing was illegal. Mrs. Clara Marshall, Chairman of the Personnel Committee of the Governing Board, in recommending the "removal" of the teachers, noted its illegality. "But," she added, "we found that the people in the streets considered these laws written to protect the monied white power structure of this city." (The teachers—the "monied white power structure"?) The day after the ouster, it was *McCoy* himself who demanded that the Superintendent place the teachers on departmental trial. And, to make his intention clear, McCoy later declared: "Not one of these teachers will be allowed to teach anywhere in this city. The black community will see to that."[9]

Superintendent Bernard Donovan, under pressure from the union, insisted that the "fired" teachers were still assigned to the district. But when they reported to work, they were barred from their classrooms and 350

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[9] One further note on how the NYCLU pamphlet handled all this. It states: "At first—and this appears to be a fact that is not generally known—McCoy tried to transfer the 19 teachers *within* the experimental district." One reason the fact is not "generally known" is that it is *not* a fact.

"Next," continues the NYCLU, "McCoy requested that the 19 be transferred to another district entirely. This request was denied by Superintendent Donovan." The Niemeyer Report of an advisory commission appointed by the Board of Education to study decentralization and chaired by John H. Niemeyer, president of Bank Street College of Education, is cited as evidence for this statement. Unfortunately for the NYCLU, there is nothing of the sort in the Report. At a press conference making the Report public, Dr. Niemeyer said that, before the last controversy, the Board had offered to transfer any teachers unacceptable to the governing board. But, according to the *New York Times,* Dr. Niemeyer "asserted that the Governing Board was determined to prove *it* had control of the schools by circumventing normal procedure. . . ."

The NYCLU pamphlet adds, "In fact, many hundreds of such [involuntary] transfers take place every school year, apparently without the UFT's objection." Again, this is just not so. As the result of an incident at a nondemonstration project school, the union demanded, "when a teacher is charged with action that may result in an involuntary transfer, a 'U' rating, or dismissal, that the matter be referred to impartial third-party arbitration."

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teachers walked out in sympathy. When ordered to return, they found teaching conditions intolerable—irresponsible youths were permitted into the schools to harrass them and to encourage school youths to act up.[10] Finally, on May 27, the teachers decided to maintain the walkout until the issue was resolved.

Mediation efforts collapsed when the Governing Board refused recommendations made by Theodore W. Kheel as a basis for further mediation efforts. These included the return of the "dismissed" teachers, except those against whom "serious" charges were levelled. Said Rev. C. Herbert Oliver, chairman of the local board, "We agree on the first point [Kheel's appointment as mediator], then part company." The union offered to submit to arbitration; the Governing Board refused.

Over the summer, Judge Francis Rivers, himself a black, heard the cases against seven teachers. Three other cases were dismissed because lawyers for the Governing Board were unable to produce witnesses or evidence supporting the allegations. Judge Rivers ruled that the cases against the other seven teachers were "unproved," and he ordered their return to continue teaching at their schools. Meanwhile, the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Governing Board recruited new teachers, 75 per cent white and mostly Jewish, to take the place of the 350 on strike. It refused to take back the ousted teachers, as well as all those who walked out. In September, the UFT struck the system to enforce Judge Rivers' arbitration award and the Superintendent's orders that all the teachers return to their posts.

That strike supposedly ensured that due process would be built into any decentralization plan. The settlement provided for the return of the ousted teachers, full salary payments for the teachers who engaged in the spring stoppage, and a guarantee that any teacher dismissed or disciplined by a local governing board could appeal to a three-man arbitration panel. But when the teachers returned to work, the Board of Education could not—or would not—enforce its part of the agreement. Teachers seeking to return to I.S. 271 were blocked by "the community," a euphemism for "Sonny" Carson of Brooklyn CORE and his young men, assorted antipoverty staff, and others from outside the district, a scattering of residents, and a handful of parents. The union charged the Governing Board with sabotaging the agreement and struck once more. Again, a settlement was reached: this time, it entailed the suspension of the Governing Board until the ousted teachers were reinstated. Violence broke out at I.S. 271; nine people were arrested (most of whom did not even live in the district) and ten policemen suffered minor injuries in a clash between Ocean Hill-Brownsville supporters and the police, seeking to open the schools to students and teachers. The Board of Education again suspended the local Board and subsequently suspended McCoy and seven of the district's eight principals for failing to comply with an order to reassign the returning teachers to their classrooms. Observers were assigned to the disputed schools, too. On October 11, for no good reason, the Board of Education, in its composition now a Lindsay Board, reinstated McCoy and the seven principals and ordered I.S. 271 reopened. The union charged the Board with breaking its agreement and encouraging vigilantism. The third strike followed.

THIS TIME THE STRIKE stretched out until it looked as though the whole mess would land in the lap of the state legislature, and the atmosphere in New York City became appallingly tense. The position of the UFT hardened; it now insisted on the removal of McCoy, the governing board, and those "scab" teachers who had threatened UFT

[10] Later, one of the charges levelled against the teachers was inability to control the students. One may wonder why.

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teachers with what Mayor Lindsay termed "verbal abuse." But in reality no one really wanted the dispute to go to the legislature. Ocean Hill-Brownsville feared that such a step might well mean the death of decentralization and the UFT that it could also mean a stiffening of the state's Taylor Law, which bans strikes among public employees but provides comparatively light penalties for violations.[11] The way to a settlement was cleared when Superintendent Donovan took action against four teachers accused of harrassing union members when they last returned to their posts. After a departmental hearing, one was transferred to another district; the three others were removed from their classrooms, pending the outcome of hearings. Then the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court upheld three to two a lower-court ruling that the Ocean Hill-Brownsville principals had been illegally appointed. The three named in the suit were directed, under the terms of the settlement, to report to the district office pending further appeal. This cleared the decks for the basic settlement—which called for the appointment by the State Board of Education of Associate State Commissioner of Education Herbert F. Johnson, later replaced by Dr. William D. Firman, as trustee of Ocean Hill-Brownsville; the establishment of a three-man committee with the responsibility of ensuring teacher rights and the power to act where violations occurred; and the addition of 10 days to the school year, and 45 minutes to the school day to make up lost time. In all, the three strikes had kept 50,000 teachers and 1 million pupils out of school for 36 of the first 48 days of the fall school term.

Conventional liberalism, sometimes preening itself as "radical," advances two reasons for the strike—one, as indicated earlier, is the teachers' white racism; the second is the UFT's alleged opposition to decentralization.[12] The evidence for this rests solely on the UFT's public fight against the so-called Bundy plan.[13] At present, the city has 30 districts (plus the three experimental districts), each averaging roughly 30 schools with 36,000 pupils (roughly the size of the Evansville, Indiana, school system). An analysis of the racial composition of grades one through eight prepared by the Bundy panel's staff shows 13 predominantly (50 per cent or more) white, 6 black, 4 Puerto Rican, and 7 Negro-Puerto Rican. Minority-group children make up just over 50 per cent of the total school population. The percentage of black or Puerto Rican administrators, however, is virtually nil and for teachers only slightly better, roughly 12 per cent.

The Bundy panel recommended up to 60 autonomous districts, which might mean districts on the order of the Norwalk, Connecticut, school system—say, 16,000 pupils each. The Bundy recommendations, however, were not as radical as many seem to think. The aim was to decentralize the system but not

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11 Pressure also mounted within the labor movement for a settlement. Fear of a stiffened Taylor Law was one factor; another was simply that unionists are also parents. Black unionists, too, added their weight. Bayard Rustin, particularly, was instrumental in persuading the UFT not to go for a "punitive" settlement.

12 The UFT has been accused of spreading racism and of "insinuating that black anti-Semitism is at the heart of the conflict." Specifically, Jason Epstein in the *New York Review of Books* charged that the union doctored two handbills: one, combining a black manifesto written by super-militant Ralph Poynter with an anonymous anti-Semitic diatribe; the other, presenting excerpts of a magazine article about Leslie Campbell's teaching in *another* school but assigning the lesson to I.S. 271 in a caption by the UFT.

To ascribe to Mr. Campbell what he did not do in I.S. 271 and to link crude anti-Semitism to Mr. Poynter's manifesto is reprehensible. The UFT's excuses—"We had no real clearing house," etc.—are weak. Still, I do not think the basic accusations hold up. Actually, in trying to indicate the general atmosphere of an escalating conflict, the UFT has been restrained in its "leafletting" and has held back a large number of documented horror stories.

13 McGeorge Bundy chaired an advisory panel on decentralization at Mayor Lindsay's behest. Its report became the basis for the Mayor's recommendations to the state legislature.

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necessarily make way for community control.[14]

Indeed, Bundy's proposal for the formulation of district boards is quite conservative. Parent assemblies in each school are to nominate delegates to a district assembly, which, in turn, would nominate six members to the "community" school board for a four-year term. The mayor would name the balance of five, giving him a fair chance of dominating the boards. The mayor would appoint four members to the central Board from a list of three to five for each vacancy submitted by a prestigious-type selection board, as well as five members from a list of three to five for each vacancy submitted by the chairmen of the district boards. Financially, the district boards would be empowered "to determine needs, develop programs, and apportion available funds among the programs." But funds are to be distributed "under a city-wide objective formula," not on the basis of any given community's need. Finances are so structured that it would be difficult for the community boards to pressure the city, or the state, for additional funds.

This was the decentralization plan fought by the UFT. The union wanted—still wants—*elected* school boards. It favors 15 districts on the grounds that this is economically more feasible and would prevent administrative costs—district superintendents, for example, get $30,000 a year—from eating up additional money that will become available when decentralization takes place.[15] In addition, although this is provided for in the Bundy plan, the union wanted strong guarantees that it would not have to go back to the year Alpha in collective bargaining. Indeed, I believe it would be a serious error for the city to allow bargaining to take place on money, benefit, and basic working conditions on a local board-by-board basis.

All of the several possible consequences of such a labor policy in a decentralized school system, I believe, would work to the disadvantage of the politically weak districts—and there are bound to be several of these.

All of the above is subject to honest differences of opinion and the city needs more, not less, debate over decentralization. Unhappily, the UFT not only lobbied, which was its right, against the Bundy-Lindsay plan, but it also sought to punish its "enemies" in the legislature politically in last spring's primaries, which was unwise. It sought the defeat of some perfectly good legislators. Luckily, it lost.

DECENTRALIZATION, however, is not "community control," and here we move to much more debatable ground indeed, as the controversy over the experimental districts shows. Community control is nowhere as popular as the liberal press would have it. Most parents, even those in the experimental districts, are dubious about its ostensible virtues. There have been consistent and persisting complaints from within the experimental districts

[14] Jason Epstein in his second article on Ocean Hill in the *New York Review of Books* makes much of the power over money that would accrue to blacks and Puerto Ricans under decentralization, enabling them to have a say not only over teaching jobs but in construction, the kitchens, and custodial work. The point is made more explicit by some black militants, who theorize that black boards would be in a position to dictate that black construction workers build schools. But in the Bundy plan this is one of several vital budget decisions that would remain firmly in the hands of the central Board, although there would presumably be more consultation than now exists between district boards and 110 Livingston Street on such matters. At present (December 5, 1968), the Board is debating such questions as it draws up new decentralization proposals for submission to the next session of the Legislature. My guess is that *if* we get decentralization, local board budgetary powers will be carefully circumscribed.

[15] There are two pragmatic arguments for decentralization, which explain why a majority of New Yorkers favored and perhaps still favor decentralization. One, the formula for state aid applies to school districts, and the city suffers because it is now considered one district. The legislature, as I understand it, is committed to applying that formula at least borough by borough, if the city comes up with an acceptable plan. Two, it will eliminate the present Board, which many favor and possibly break-up/shake-up the 110 Livingston Street bureaucracy, something to be hoped for.

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about the unrepresentative nature of the governing boards. "Parent representatives" from two schools in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, for example, neither have children in those schools nor reside in the district. *A petition seeking the removal of the present Governing Board secured 3,000 signatures in the district, just about twice the number of votes cast in the election of the Board.* The Ocean Hill-Brownsville Board—with the support of the Mayor and his appointees on the Board of Education—has fought every effort to secure new elections. A condition of one of its offers to take the teachers back was that there should be no new elections. As Maurice Goldbloom points out in his critique of the NYCLU pamphlet, "Apparently, the community control the Governing Board demands does not include community control over *it*."

"Community control," obviously, means something quite different to militant black separatists than it does to most everybody else. Significantly, one of the things the Ford Foundation never asked as it maneuvered the three experiments into "community control" was what "community control," if any, the parents wanted. But the Niemeyer advisory commission did. Its findings indicate some confusion among parents as to what exactly "community control" is and extraordinary decisiveness as to whom parents did and did not want to participate in the affairs of their schools. Roughly, half the black parents believed that there had been an increase in community control in the three districts; 16 per cent felt, "in general," that there was "too much," and 42 per cent that there was "too little." Among Negro parents, the comparable percentages were 21 and 49 per cent; among Puerto Ricans, 9 and 34 per cent. Of Ocean Hill-Brownsville parents, 19 per cent felt there was "too much," 46 percent "too little." In Two Bridges, the percentages were 6 and 33; in I.S. 201, 24 and 49. But when asked who should be influential under a strong decentralization program, 28 per cent of the parents opted for "parent leaders" and 35 per cent for the "professional school staff." Only 2 per cent called for either local politicians or local poverty workers or black militant leaders, 3 per cent for local religious leaders, and 5 per cent thought civic leaders ought to be influential. These percentages shifted a point or two from district to district and as between black and Puerto Rican parents. In short, the parents seem to reject the very kinds of leaders currently dominating the boards in the three experimental districts, and those leaders most favored by the Lindsay administration, the Ford Foundation, and the liberal white establishment. As the Niemeyer Report concludes, "Although twice as many parents support as oppose the concept of decentralization, they do not believe that it means they or any local group will or should have complete control. They view decentralization as an opportunity for greater community participation, but they expect and prefer that professional educators participate in planning the education that their children receive."

If there is to be reconciliation, it must be built upon that foundation. Unfortunately, the white liberal establishment shows little understanding of the need for teacher-parent cooperation if education is to improve. Throughout the controversy, there has been a good deal of finger-pointing—at the teachers and their union. As Patrick Harnett, a teacher, points out in a perceptive article in the *Village Voice* (October 31, 1968), "The thrust of the present attack on school problems is against teachers as failures and not against a school system that has failed." I believe the thrust is a good deal broader: New York City is a testing ground for a new establishment theory of "counterinsurgency."

BEFORE THE MARCH on Washington in 1963, Michael Harrington and Bayard Rustin argued, convincingly I believe, that the movement of black people in America could serve as a catalyst for a new era of

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progress. The idea was to build a coalition that might do something about jobs, education, housing, health problems, even possibly affect the inequitable distribution of wealth. As we all know, the coalition has fallen apart; what's more, the two key wings of the coalition—the labor movement and the civil rights movement—are being egged on to fight each other.

As radicals, we have always recognized the existence of racism among white workers, condemned it and at the same time tried to point out how it worked against the best interests of working people. Clearly, racism has been used by employers, demagogues, and the less fussy elements of the establishment to prevent black and white workers from working together for common goals. All this is rather elementary but I raise it because we are now being told that white working men—and especially their unions—are the *cause* for black people being locked into black ghettos.

If slums are caused by racism, then we need to look no further than at the teachers, plumbers, or steel workers. There is no need to concern ourselves with such esoteric matters as the oil depletion allowances, or tax loop holes allowing millionaires to escape scot-free from income tax payments, or even to consider that David Rockefeller of Chase Manhattan is in fact a much more powerful man than the mayor of our city. So what if taxes are inequitable, incomes maldistributed, and housing conditions determined by banks, insurance companies, and real estate magnates? All we need to do is bust a union!

If you think this oversimplifies what is going on, listen to John Doar, Lindsay's appointee to the Board of Education and its president, as quoted in *Fortune*, January 1968. One can imagine how pleased *Fortune* readers must feel as they read, "Union concepts of security and seniority were formulated in the period of struggle between company and union. Now the struggle is between the Negroes and unions." A few paragraphs later, Doar adds, "It is our position that a basic conflict exists between labor union concepts and civil rights concepts. Something has to give."

Lindsay and Doar, the Ford Foundation and the establishment have been trying to make something give these last few months in New York. And it is not racism—black or white. They escalated a localized—admittedly complicated—conflict into a city-wide near disaster. Instead of mediating, for example, Mayor Lindsay fostered the spread of conflict. His Board of Education, instead of working in the interests of all the parents of the city, has actively sided with a minority faction within a minority community in a struggle for control over that community.

When the UFT shut down the schools, the Mayor and the Board might have taken a leaf from sophisticated management-labor relations, recognized the reality, and sat down to negotiate. The closing of schools would have generated broad pressure from parents and the public for settlement—and conceivably one more to the liking of the Board than the union. What in fact did the Board do? It declared the schools open, named the first teacher in as principal, and invited angry parents to slug it out with their teachers who were forced, as the Board must have known they would be, to mount mass picket lines. If the devil himself had desired it, no other policy would have succeeded so well in spreading racial antagonism throughout the city.

We are, I believe, in for more of this sort of action. The new man in the White House has already talked favorably about "black capitalism." There has been a sudden flow of foundation and corporate money into "black capitalist" ventures. Separatist tendencies within the black community are being encouraged. After all, if the overwhelming majority of blacks voted for Hubert Humphrey and by extension for inclusion in our society, where else are Republicans to go? "Community control" is big this year with

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the foundations. Hopefully, blacks will soon realize that "community control" is another bag woven by Whitey, that the only way to escape manipulation by the white upper-class establishment is to make common cause in fruitful political action with one's natural allies, those "others" who also suffer the consequences of an inequitous economic and social system, as well as with organized labor, urban and urbane liberals, other minorities, youth, and the "new South."

Reconciliation in New York City may indeed be the first step in rebuilding on a stronger foundation the coalition of conscience that has been the source of all our progress in recent decades.

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Erazim V. Kohák

Requiem for Utopia

Socialist Reflections on Czechoslovakia

TWO DAYS BEFORE the Soviet army entered Czechoslovakia, I received a letter from a student friend in Prague. The writer is an intelligent young man who received his entire formal education under the Communist regime. He had participated vigorously in the Czechoslovak reform in the spring of 1968, and had spent his vacation the following summer visiting first Nanterre, then Berlin. He speaks German and French fluently, reads English, and has made extensive contacts with his Western colleagues. His reflections on socialism East and West are worth quoting:

•

> Western socialism, especially in its radical form, took me completely by surprise. It seemed so completely unreal, something from a different planet or a different era. You have completely dissociated theory and practice. The men I met are all properly repelled by the realities of authoritarian rule, but they keep on preaching the same weary Utopian ideologies that can lead to nothing else. They live in a romantic dreamworld in which their dear radical rhetoric is perfectly consistent with their apparently sincere faith in freedom and justice. But do they really think they could apply their radical Utopia in a real world and still respect their libertarian commitments? Do they really think their Utopias could be benign if their revolutions were not comic-opera coups on indulgent campuses but real ventures in the exercise of power?
>
> I met a few hard-headed colleagues, but most of the men who clamored for attention were three-semester intellectuals, pampered children of your permissive, affluent society, throwing tantrums because Father gave them only education, security, and freedom—but not Utopia. They bitterly resent society because it does not treat them as the fulcrum of the universe: though from what they told me about themselves it seemed that their families did treat them that way. I can't take them seriously. They seem to have no idea of the cost or the value of the privileges they receive abundantly and *gratis*. They dismiss them as "bourgeois"—in Czechoslovakia we are struggling for just a fraction of what they dismiss. I suppose their histrionics do have some individual cathartic value, like the old duelling fraternities, but socially they seem infinitely irrelevant. Can you imagine one of them in Czechoslovakia?
>
> What surprises me most is not that they take themselves seriously—students always do, and we are no exception—but that their elders take them seriously. In the West it seems possible to grow quite old without having to grow up—you have so much slack, so much room, so much padding between yourselves and reality. You can afford a great deal: we can't. For instance, can you imagine reading Sartre's *Les communistes et la paix* here in 1952? That was just at the time of the Slansky trials. Or reading Marcuse on repressive tolerance, in Prague at the time of the Writers' Union Congress? It was not until I started visiting the West that I began to understand that a Sartre or a Marcuse can simply afford a great deal of illusion. You all live in a different era—you still believe in Utopia. You simply haven't faced up to the fact that you can't build a Utopia without terror, and that before long, terror is all that's left. You have little stomach for terror—after 20 years, we have even less. But you like your radical illusions too well.
>
> We've had our fill of Utopia. No more. Now we are building piecemeal, building a

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democratic society that will be as imperfect as the people who live in it. It will be socialist because it is an industrial and a democratic society—it just doesn't work the other way around. It won't be a Utopia, but it will be a human kind of society, fit for people to live in.

•

I read this letter while listening to the Soviet Ambassador explain that the armed might of his country had descended upon the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic in order to protect socialism.

II

NOT THAT I THINK my friend right in everything—there is much he does not know and understand. Still, his grasp of the dynamics of socialism is uncomfortably accurate.

The strength of socialism has always been its steady effort to build the prerequisites of democracy and social justice in an industrial society. But the appeal of socialism has been something different, something much less tangible—the promise of the millennium. Social Democratic parties in the nineteenth century were transforming society through a persistent, unspectacular effort to build a place in the social structure for the underprivileged, and to assure them the means and ability to assume that place. But what drew workers and still moves intellectuals to the party had little to do with concrete social progress. It was the ageless vision of a millennium, a fairytale kingdom in which men would still live together, but all the frictions of social existence—and, by implication, all the frustrations of individual life—would disappear. For the tedious, frustrating work of social progress the party needed a vision and the myth of apocalyptic revolution or, later, of the *Massenstreik,* the apocalyptic General Strike which would usher in the millenium, filled that need.

The millennial rhetoric was always grossly inconsistent with the evolutionary, progressive practice of socialism. On the one hand, the party worked to give the workers the wherewithal of social progress, to help them gain self-respect, economic and social security, education, legal protection, and to transform social structures in depth, "radically," making them responsive to the needs of all men. On the other hand, its orators dismissed all such effort as irrelevant and proclaimed the coming of a Hegelian cataclysm from which a perfect society would arise as if by magic, in which depraved workers would suddenly become capable of establishing and administering a perfectly humane society, and in which new, just institutions would spontaneously spring up precisely from the depth of deprivation.

The pattern here is that of the familiar romantic myth in which the very handicaps of the underprivileged become an asset. Touched by the magic wand, the princess loves the peasant lad precisely because he is crude (unaffected) and boorish (spontaneous). In revolutionary mythology, the magic wand was Hegelian dialectic. While in practice imperfect progress was won in patient, tedious, determined work, in millennial rhetoric the law of negation of negation was to produce Utopia in an exhilarating cataclysm, with the necessity of a law of nature. In his "Critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*" in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher,* Marx announced that precisely because the German working class was completely depraved, precisely because its condition was beneath critique, it would establish a genuinely humane society.

There is nothing particularly socialistic about this apocalyptic Utopianism. Quite the contrary. Socialism is first of all realistic, tackling the concrete problems of making human existence possible in an industrial age. Marx himself damned Utopianism in his controversy with Schapper-Willich, citing the undeveloped condition of the German workers as reason for 50 years of preparation required for political power (Mehring, *Die Geschichte der deutschen Sozialdemokratie,* vol. I, p. 430).

But, as Marx himself noted, men can

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stand only limited doses of reality. They need their illusions, and as long as actual power with its limitations and responsibilities was not a real consideration, the revolutionary mythology could seem harmless enough.

With the upheaval of World War I and the collapse of the Russian empire, the situation changed radically. Russia in 1917 was a society virtually devoid of overt structure, radically open to experiment. At the same time, it was hopelessly backward. The problems it faced were not those of an industrial society, and Western socialist programs were wildly inapplicable to it. Its urgent need was presocialist, practical—the need to build a modern society. Socialists might have been able to contribute to the process, but the only way some of them knew to profit from it was to emphasize the Hegelian ideological superstructure of socialism, the revolutionary fairy-tale of the peasant lad becoming a shining prince at the touch of a magic cataclysm.

The men who carried out the Communist revolution finally did just that. They were not practical men. In temper, they were intellectual aristocrats interested in changing the ideological façade but having little patience for the unspectacular, ambiguous work of concrete, deep-reaching ("radical") change. A truly basic change requires work, the detailed, tedious, patient, persistent work of rebuilding basic attitudes and relations. A revolution is necessarily a poor instrument for such basic change. No matter how spectacular and exhilarating it may be, it leaves basic attitudes, habits, and relations among men unchanged; the social structures that emerge from it, though their ideology reflects the revolution, still articulate the old social orientation. Not surprisingly, Russian society, its paternalism, its stratification, its police apparatus, its provincialism, its primitivism—even the foreign policy of its government, in both goals and techniques—remained relatively constant in spite of the revolutionary change of façade. T. G. Masaryk's sociological study *The Spirit of Russia* published in 1913, may have appeared momentarily out of date in 1920, but it is quite accurate in 1968. Ideological labeling has changed—for Orthodox Church read Communist party, for Czar read First Secretary, for *Okhranka* read MVD; but basic attitudes and relations, those which socialists recognize as the real fabric of society, have remained unchanged.

Unfortunately socialists, long accustomed to their revolutionary mythology, are easily dazzled by ideological trappings. Hammer and sickle on the flag of a sovereign state, the whispered names in an official hagiography, red stars on soldiers' caps, all the trappings of power and success easily outshone both the sordid realities of Russian life and the tangible social progress of unspectacular Western socialism. With the Russian Revolution, the Hegelian ideological myth became respectable. Worse, it became "socialism."

To be sure, even the dazzling façade of Russian *Parteistaatssozialismus* could not quite conceal the persistent Czarist mentality. It was Lenin who characterized Czarist Russia as "a state which is a cross between Asiatic despotism and European absolutism . . . not an organ of any class of Russian society but a military-administrative machinery whose task is to resist the pressure of a higher Western civilization" (*Iskra,* March 5, 1904). That description fitted the new Communist regime all too well. But men who desperately wanted to believe could always find excuses as to why the magic failed to work. Russia was backward, it was encircled by hostile states, etc., etc., and of course all of that was true. For 50 years the energies of socialists have been drawn away from the urgent tasks of social progress to a cataclysmic Utopian fantasy. In Czechoslovakia in 1920, the socialists lost their considerable parliamentary majority and the chance to build a social democracy because the ideological, Communist-led wing of the party chose to withdraw from Parliament and wait for an apocalyptic revolution. Ever since, the pattern they set has been repeated throughout

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the West, down to the young ideologues of today whose conception of becoming involved is to abstain from elections.

III

THE SIGNIFICANCE of the Czechoslovak experience is that with us the millenium did come, under conditions as ideal as an imperfect world can offer. Czechoslovakia was an advanced industrial country, far more so than the England or Germany of Marx's time. Culturally it was part of the West, with a mature democratic tradition; yet it was surrounded by friendly "socialist" countries. Its industries had been socialized several years earlier, and there was no hard-core political opposition. The Communist party had won, in 1946, some 38 per cent of the vote in a reasonably free election, yet had subsequently seized power in an armed coup, and so was unhindered by any constitutional guarantees of personal or social freedom. The Hegelian myth that had lured socialists for half a century was finally being acted out exactly as three generations of visionaries had imagined.

The men who guided the experiment were true believers. From the beginning, they applied the theory of a radical break in all aspects of personal and social life. Tight internal and external censorship sealed off the country from the outside world and from its own past. History was rewritten and rebuilt. Organizations and men, whether Communist or non-Communist, who had any pretensions to autonomy disappeared. Not that the Czechoslovak Communists were any more crude or repressive than their rhetorical colleagues in the West—they weren't. But they were engaged in rule, not rhetoric—and in practice. A theoretical revolutionary can speak of "protecting the freedom of the people to develop along a socialist path unhampered by reactionary propaganda"—the ruling revolutionary has to censor the press and liquidate offending writers, and that is what the Czech Communists did. The human, social, and economic cost was tremendous, but the break was complete—everything and everyone even vaguely associated with the past was wiped out. The new Czechoslovakia was a completely "liberated" country, free of anything that might have repressed its development.

According to Utopian rhetoric from Lenin on, new institutions, social relations, and new men, free, unalienated, should have sprung from socialist praxis. Life had been liberated from all impediments, it should have blossomed, free and abundant. But nothing of the sort happened. The new institutions expressed nothing but the new masters' conception of Utopia. Creatures of theory, they remained theoretical—alien, lifeless, apathetic. The people proved apathetic rather than zealous, preferring their lost freedom, even their folly, to perfection. They were willing to be socialists, and they were willing to be enthusiastic, but they were not willing to be enthusiastic about socialism. At the height of the Stalin period, a Czech friend told me, "At home they expect us to have sex orgies with socialism." The story, in a nutshell, of Czechoslovakia's Utopian experiment is that Czechs and Slovaks continued to prefer women.

It was at this point that the hidden logic of all social messianism came to the fore. The rhetorical Utopians convinced themselves that they had found the recipe for perfection. When their fellow men failed to share their enthusiasm, they embarked on a crusade to eliminate whatever was blinding them to their superior insight—Jews, capitalists, sinners. But when their crusade succeeded and men still failed to conform to their true faith, they found themselves forced to resort to coercion. Like all Utopians, they were convinced they were coercing men for their own good, and that in time the coercion would become unnecessary. But as Masaryk pointed out about Marx in *The Foundations of Marxism* in 1898, the Utopians are shoddy psychologists. Coercion produces not enthusiasm and agreement, but alienation and apathy, which in turn can be dislodged only

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by greater coercion, leading to still greater apathy. The escalating spiral of apathy and terror is the real *mors immortalis* of social messianism. The Czechoslovak experiment proved that the temptation to prod progress with a bayonet, so attractive to powerless radical rhetoreticians, leads not to progress but to apathy and terror, regardless of the ideology in whose name it is exercised.

IV

WHAT IS IT LIKE, living in Utopia? Perhaps the most eloquent testimony is the recent Czech film, *The Fifth Horseman Is Fear*. Western reviewers interpreted it as just another wartime melodrama with bad Germans pitted against good Czechs and/or suffering Jews. That story is there, and the film does include some rather obvious period pieces. The resistance worker, his acts, even his clothes and his apartment, clearly belong to the war years. So does the surrealistic brothel scene, with its gas-chamber showers and Wehrmacht uniforms. But Czech audiences could not fail to recognize another dimension —Prague landmarks erected long after the war, late-model cars in the streets, contemporary clothes, all-Czech posters pasted over wartime bilingual ones.

This second dimension stands out most clearly in the official notices which appear in prominent close-ups throughout the film. Their format (though not their color—German notices were dark-red) is that of the wartime bilingual notices, a German eagle in the center, with parallel German and Czech columns below. In the film, the parallel columns are retained, *but both sides are set in Czech*. The point of the film is clear: for the man who must live in Utopia, there is no difference between Right and Left Hegelians. The forties and the fifties, Hitler years and Stalin years merge. The only difference is that this time both the oppressors and the victims are Czech.

The Fifth Horseman is only one of the countless testimonies, produced both in the last months of gunpoint "socialism" and in the seven months of freedom, that the basic common fact of life in *any* Utopia is alienation. The word has become so fashionable that to restore it as a tool of social analysis we need to give it a more precise meaning. By alienation we shall mean a dissociation of an individual's public identity from his private one. Under ideal conditions, the two would be integrally related. Public life would serve to act out private identity; private identity would in turn be enriched, reinforced, and challenged by the demands of praxis. When this relation breaks down, for whatever reason, we can speak of alienation—public life becomes formal, empty, lifeless, while private identity becomes involuted, explosive, and distorted.

That much is commonplace. The reason why alienation can today serve as a revolutionary slogan, and not simply as a tool in the perennial attempt to rescue Karl Marx from irrelevance, is that it can be used as a bridge between private problems and public issues, mobilizing the energy of individual failure and frustration for the purposes of social action. But it is an ambiguous tool because it blurs two phenomena which, though never altogether dissociated, are still basically distinct and require different strategies; pathological alienation and social alienation.

Pathological alienation is the dissociation of public acts and private identity brought about by a defect in the latter. The subject is unable to relate his private identity to (any) sustained public role, regardless of social conditions, because his definition of personal identity is in principle solipsistic, incompatible with the strains and stresses of social existence. This is a phenomenon characteristic, for instance, of both the extreme "Left" and the extreme "Right," and one reason why the far "Left" rejects all concrete social progress as capitulation to "the system." If the cause of alienation is a pathological inability of the subject to function in *any* social system, only the fairytale land of revolutionary apocalypse

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will do—and even that only as long as it does not become reality—witness the regular disenchantment of the far "Left" with its successive Robin Hood heroes whenever they actually succeed in bringing their experiment into practice. Pathological alienation is only symptomatically relevant to social theory.

The alienation which the Utopian experiment produced in Czechoslovakia is an entirely different phenomenon. It is *social alienation,* brought about by the structure of society rather than by that of private identity. It is more closely analogous to the alienation of American blacks, to whom the structure of society denies opportunity for participation, than to the alienation of disaffected students. The Czech protesters were generally adults; workers, students, writers, men from every social stratum, ready and able to sustain the responsibility of being adults in a society. It was the Utopian ideology of the regime which made successful integration of (any) private identity with social existence effectively impossible.

Social alienation is as characteristic of Utopian societies as pathological alienation is of affluent, permissive ones. Utopian regimes invariably pay lip service to freedom and participation, but the logic of Utopia forces them to deny their subjects the materials from which a satisfactory private identity is built—privacy, personal security, and especially freedom. Freedom inevitably includes the possibility of error, and Utopia in principle demands perfection. The Czechoslovak regime was Utopian, committed to remolding men in its image, and so, quite independently of the content of its ideology, it was also committed to paternalistic authoritarianism and its practical enforcement. Quite logically, the basic reality of life in Utopia was apathy—and terror.

V

CZECHOSLOVAK REFORM under Alexander Dubcek signified essentially a rejection of the Utopia that sacrifices men to the demands of a prescription. First of all democratic, it was determined to safeguard personal freedom and personal security, because 20 years of gunpoint "socialism" had taught the Czechs and Slovaks, Communists included, that the logic of terror is self-defeating. In Czechoslovakia there could be no question of whether personal freedom and security can be violated for the sake of a social ideal. Czechs and Slovaks have learned that once freedom and security are violated, any ideology becomes simply a rationale for self-perpetuating terror. The reform was democratic—and it was also fundamentally and emphatically socialist. Czechoslovakia is an advanced industrial country, in which democracy necessarily means economic democracy as well. In all its aspects, the heady Czechoslovak spring of 1968 was an experiment moving toward postmillennial socialism or, in traditional terms, toward social democracy.

Not that Dubcek and his colleagues were in any sense social democrats when they came to power. They weren't; they were Communists who still shared the aristocratic assumption of all Utopians that a monopoly of power must remain in the hands of the enlightened elect, the Party. But they were determined to be humane authoritarians, respecting the rights of their subjects. In their seven months in power they discovered that the idea of a humane authoritarianism, the standard illusion of well-intentioned rhetorical revolutionists, is an illusion, a *contradictio in adiecto.* A humane authoritarianism would respect the rights and freedom of its subjects, and so inevitably create the possibility of dissent and opposition. Faced with opposition, the humane authoritarian faces the choice of ceasing to be authoritarian—or ceasing to be humane. Repression, whatever its overt aim, can be humane only in rhetoric—in practice it necessarily means breaking men. Czechs and Slovaks, including Dubcek, were too familiar with the logic of terror to opt for the latter alternative. After seven months, the program which started out

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as a program of humane communism became a program of social democracy.

To be sure, Czechoslovakia did not and could not become a social democracy overnight. The reformers worked in detail, steadily, on a hundred concrete programs, from rehabilitation of political prisoners to economic reform and social restructuring. They built consciously on Czechoslovakia's tradition of freedom and social progress. But the change was too radical to be spectacular. By August only the first steps had been taken. Still, the direction of change was clear, and received the full support of the whole nation. The experiment in democratic socialism was succeeding beyond the fondest hopes of its leaders and supporters.

VI

THE END CAME on August 21, when the Hegelian Left repeated the pattern set by the Hegelian Right 30 years earlier. The workers of the Skoda Works, who painted swastikas on Russian tanks, made it clear that they failed to appreciate the difference.

But why did the Russians move in? The occupation of Czechoslovakia cost them much and won them little. The usual explanations about the threat posed by Czech liberalism side-step the crucial question—why should liberalism be a threat? It was no threat to Russian national interest. Czechoslovak security on the crossroads of superpowers is necessarily tied to a Soviet alliance, and the Czechs proved themselves fully aware, in both word and deed, of this fact. Nor was Czech liberalism a threat to socialism. Czechoslovakia is an industrial country in which socialism is a necessary consequence of democracy, and again the Czechs and Slovaks were obviously aware of this. Neither the Soviet alliance nor socialism were ever issues in the Czechoslovak reform—both were taken entirely for granted by the whole spectrum of national opinion.

Liberalism was a threat precisely because it *supported* socialism and the Soviet alliance, and so brought into question the very legitimacy of the Utopian claim to power. This is no abstract consideration. Not only the Soviet regime, but any government in the world can exercise power effectively only as long as the governed recognize, tacitly at least, its *right to rule*—as long as they recognize it as a legitimate government. They might, and usually do, consider it a very bad government indeed. They might criticize it at every turn and resolve to replace its personnel or policies at the earliest opportunity. They might look forward to its fall and feel unhappy and alienated under its rule. Yet as long as they consider it a *legitimate* bad government, society will continue to function. The recognition of the legitimacy of power in the making and enforcing of social decisions is the constituting factor in society, and failure to acquire legitimacy in the eyes of the governed reduces even the most benign attempt at government to arbitrary tyranny.

Since the last echoes of "divine right" or "right of conquest" died out in the nineteenth century, legitimation in Europe has invariably meant legitimation by public interest. The democratic model interpreted acts in the public interest as acts receiving popular support: the legitimacy of a democratic government derives at least theoretically from the ability of the governed to confirm or reject their rulers. The model has achieved such prestige that even totalitarian regimes have felt the need to stage plebiscites and elections to give themselves an aura of legitimacy. Soviet elections in the past have invariably been elaborate, ostentatious affairs. They have also been invariably uncontested—a Utopian revolutionary regime, finally, cannot equate public interest with public support. The governed, being unregenerate, cannot be expected to realize that the particular Utopia, whether nationalist or socialist, is in their true interest. They are too accustomed to their old self and the old order.

Soviet Communism, both at home and abroad, has always claimed the legitimacy of

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superior insight. The basic proposition of Soviet political philosophy, so basic that it is taken for granted in most rhetoric, is that the Soviet regime—or any regime—is legitimate because it is "socialist," orthodox, and so in the *true* interest of the people, *whether* they realize it or not. Anyone who dissents must be either a knave or a fool. It was this logic which led to the startling conclusion that a Tukhachevsky or a Beria, a Slansky or a Clementis, since they obviously were not fools, must have been imperialist agents. This is the logic which led to the condemnation of Dubcek as a traitor, and which makes the Russians insist that the Czechs produce acceptable scapegoats to explain their recent dissent. The grotesque insistence on Byzantine adulation of all things Russian, paralleled by men as disparate as Hitler, Franco, Trujillo, or Mao, is not simply a psychological quirk—it is a necessary corollary of the claim that Utopian revolutionism legitimizes its own acts.

The Czechoslovak reform did not threaten the Soviet Union or socialism, but by supporting them challenged the basic premise of their rule. Soviet rule is predicated on the premise that it is legitimate because it is "socialist"—while Czechoslovak democracy admitted that socialism itself requires legitimation by popular consent.

VII

As a Czech, I find little consolation in the fact that tanks can exercise power but cannot make it legitimate or restore the shattered Hegelian illusions of Utopian revolutionism. Czechs and Slovaks might be able to mitigate the impact of Russian rule through passive resistance, but the Russians are in effective control of the country, and able to impose absolute limits on its development. There will in all likelihood be periods of relative relaxation. This is to be expected—coercion produces apathy, and has to be relaxed periodically to allow for some life and spontaneity. But such relaxation creates the possibility of dissent, and the harsher the earlier coercion, the more radical the dissent will be. Unless the Soviet leadership is prepared to abdicate its authoritarian position, it must follow each period of relaxation with another freeze, as the purges of the thirties, postwar Stalinism, or the present hardening of internal and external policy. But the cycles are not progressive or cumulative—today's neo-Stalinism is no more benign than Lenin's War Communism half a century ago, and it would be naive to pin one's hopes on a gradual mellowing of Communism. The internal dynamics of Utopianism make such mellowing most unlikely.

The ideals of human freedom and social justice remain valid. Democracy—democracy for blacks as well as whites, in economics as well as politics, at home as well as in remote reaches of Latin America or Eastern Europe, remains valid. Socialism, the ideal of social justice and social responsibility in industrial society, remains valid. Human and civil rights, the right of every man to personal identity and social participation, all remain valid. But the Utopian myths of self-proclaimed rhetorical radicals do not advance these ideals. The detour on which too many socialists embarked in 1917 is over, finished, discredited, revealed as an exhilarating, aristocratic and ultimately reactionary social sport, not the radical social progress it claimed to be. The task that remains is the work of social progress—not the aristocratic sport of revolution, but the solid work of radical, deep-rooted transformation of society. Men may still demand their daily dose of illusion, the exhilaration of revolution or "confrontation" rather than the down-to-earth facts and figures of a Freedom Budget; but those who cater to this demand can no longer do so in the name of social progress—or in the name of socialism.

Utopia is dead. Czechoslovakia has been a graveyard of illusions. As a Czech social democrat, I can only hope that it will also prove the cradle of a new social progress.

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François Bondy

The Engaged and the Enraged

THE DISTINCTION between the commitment of the engaged writer and the outcry of the enraged writer is not merely verbal. Engaged literature—the term is reminiscent of numerous, now dated discussions among French intellectuals in the early postwar years, particularly of Jean-Paul Sartre's essay *What Is Literature?,* in which he asked writers to become engaged, without calling for any specific political affiliation. Enragement—this mood found its most harmless expression ten years later among the "angry young men," as for example the playwright John Osborne. Today, they are no longer young, and not all of them remain angry.

Perhaps the distinction can be made clear by naming names. Engaged—Brecht; enraged — Céline. Engaged — Malraux; enraged — Mailer. Engaged—Sartre; enraged—Genet. That four of these six writers are French is no accident. The French intellectual tradition of involvement in public life dates back to the Enlightenment, to such polar opposites as Voltaire and Rousseau, to the famous "manifesto of the intellectuals" in the Dreyfus Affair, and to the declarations against the Algerian War. In the eyes of some, this dedication to the pursuit of truth—as exemplified by Romain Rolland's self-imposed exile in World War I—constitutes the glory of the intellectuals. Others, like Julien Benda, see it as the "treason of the clerics," a renunciation of intellectual integrity in favor of political activity and a role in everyday affairs, neither of which could serve the essential function of philosophy or literature.

The engaged writer: the term poses some problems, for engaged also means hired, and fails to make clear the difference between the writer who follows his conscience and the one who has tendered it to a party or government he believes to be the personification of justice and progress.

I shall use the term "engaged" only in the sense of a free commitment not subject to authority from above. This tradition is a proud one, dating back to Voltaire, who until his dying breath spoke out for victims of intolerance, to Zola and Heinrich Mann. They are the heirs of the Enlightenment and the Encyclopedists. Since then, engagement has lost some of its naiveté. The works of major "engaged writers" such as Orwell and Camus deal with the ambiguous position of the writer taking a stand on contemporary problems and hence are self-critical. The engaged writer aware of the complexities of modern life tends to be an individualist; he does not identify with any specific political tendency but preserves distance; yet since he continues to be "engaged," he attempts to combine detachment and involvement. Once that happens, he ceases to think of himself as the voice of the silent, and it is the *problems* of engagement that may well come to form the main part of his engaged writings.

> For ten years French intellectuals discussed the great question of the age before a mirror, so to speak, and what they were looking for was not objective knowledge but the striking of a proper attitude—the right traditional posture. The "testament," the "personal document" which, almost without literary transposition, reproduced the author's more or less profound reflections as he read his daily newspaper, the diary published day by day, and journalism *tout court* became the dominant forms of this literature of men who were so busy keeping up appearances

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> that they barely had time to formulate their thoughts, far less to organize them. Through all the events of the post-war era, the aim was to preserve one's good conscience and intellectual balance by carefully measured protests against tyranny in Spain and tyranny in Czechoslovakia, race discrimination in America and forced labor in Russia, executions in Persia and executions in Budapest. In the end, everything that happened in some part of the world came to be viewed in terms of an Incarnate Reason busy with the supreme problem of its own consistency. The one theme of *"littérature engagée"* finally became—itself; and *"engagement"* ended in solipsism. . . . There sprang up in [Sartre's] wake a whole literature, written by intellectuals about intellectuals. . . .[1]

The "enraged" writer: he suffers from the evils of the world and is indignant over them. He loudly proclaims his suffering and his anger, and he hates the existing order or disorder more than he loves its victims. (However, this is a generalization which must be re-examined.) He prefers the magic of exorcism to sober reason. He does not permit any detachment, any awareness of his personal problems, any irony, to stand between himself and his writings. This closeness can be an incomparable poetic force but also an intellectual and literary failing. The engaged writer attempts to persuade by reason; the enraged writer appeals—and frequently successfully—to the immediate sympathy which his outcry evokes and with which others can identify. Since literature in a rationalized society also can serve as a symbol of chaos, as a reversion to the magical powers of the word in contrast to language as a sane, purposeful, orderly system, the "enraged" poet is in league with eerie yet nonetheless real forces, with the rebellion against a practical, material world. And who would not favor rebellion against total objectification? The enraged is better able to give free rein to his emotions. His work will always be more autobiographical than that of the engaged who, although rebelling against external authority, follows an inner discipline and whose writings are part of an ordered world—the world of tomorrow which he pits against that of today.

The label "activist literature" can be attached to both engaged and enraged. Neither is satisfied with simply writing, neither is satisfied with the mere existence of his work. They have heeded the exhortation of Rimbaud, the youthful genius of "rage," to change life, and Marx's exhortation to change the world. André Breton and the Surrealists dreamed of uniting the two, simultaneously to change life and the world. They hoped to achieve these twin goals by appealing to what is visionary, spontaneous, and untrammeled in man, as well as through criticism of social conditions and active support of such political upheavals as the Russian Revolution.

One tends to think of the enraged as fascists, as writers in whom emotion and instinct dominate, and of the engaged as Marxist-oriented, analytical, and systematic. To put it crudely: rage—extreme Right; engagement—Left. That disparate pair of the thirties, Céline and Malraux, fit this categorization very well. Céline in his contorted, fantastic autobiographical novels wrote with a violent, obscene obsessiveness about his disgust with the world. He became a pioneer of the new French prose. Writers like Sartre who have nothing in common with him have acknowledged their debt to him.

The enraged find release in the act of writing, just as a fit of temper helps to still anger. But Céline's fury with the world could not be stilled and his obsession had activist elements. The "engaged" writer Elio Vittorini, in his *Conversazione in Sicilia* (1939), calls *rabbia astratta*—abstract rage against the world—the basic mood of a generation. Céline's, however, was a concrete rage that looked for targets and if need be created its own. The goal was not to change conditions

[1] Herbert Lüthy, "The French Intellectuals," in George B. de Huszar (ed.), *The Intellectuals: A Controversial Portrait* (Chicago: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), pp. 446–47.

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but to wipe out the guilty, in Céline's case "the Jews," whose massacre he called for without really believing in the fulfillment of the wish. The gulf between the private obsessions of Céline, a doctor of the poor who never harmed nor denounced nor persecuted anyone, and the public obsessions of Hitler is the gulf between literature and reality. Yet admittedly the gulf between Céline and Hitler was smaller than, for instance, that between Brecht and Stalin, because lack of detachment makes for similarities, whereas the literature of detachment preserves differences, even though some statements seem occasionally to abolish it.

WHAT ABOUT EZRA POUND, celebrated as a pioneer of modern poetry, who spent years in a mental institution as an alternative to imprisonment as a traitor? His anger and ideas are scattered through his writings. "Pétain defended Verdun, while Blum was defending a bidet," he said in his *Pisan Cantos,* and also: "The yidd is a stimulant, and the goyim are cattle/ in gt/ proportion and go to saleable slaughter/ with the maximum of docility/ . . . and the goyim are undoubtedly in great numbers cattle/ whereas a Jew will receive information." When the war ended and details about the massacre of the Jews became known, it was not quite so easy to judge Pound solely on aesthetic grounds as a major poet. His and Céline's rage so closely paralleled actual events that their works were credited with an effectiveness that they surely did not possess—least of all the difficult poetry of Ezra Pound. The outcry of the poet was judged as though it were a deed.

The examples of Céline and Pound (oddly enough, Germany has not produced any major anti-Semitic literature, only an influential subliterature) might give rise to the impression that anti-Semitism, the imagined slaughter of the "evil ones," was the hallmark of contemporary enragement. But that would be false. The works of Norman Mailer, the Jewish novelist and pamphleteer, increasingly combine radical social criticism of urban America with a cry of rage. He does not lead any specific battle, he does not point the way, or rather, he does not know the way. He tells how it is and how the American dream has turned into a nightmare. In his more rational writings Mailer examines the steady onslaught on the nervous system made by life in the big cities, and he seeks to cushion the shock by aggressive countermeasures. He sees the extremism of an enraged art and literature as the last defense against infamous conditions of life.

In *Cannibals and Christians,* Mailer says that sex and drugs play an ever greater role in his books and that these take on an intoxicating quality. Mailer is not reacting to an evil but to a desolate world whose major sin is boredom and indifference, that "mood of the time" which forms the essence of both of Moravia's best works and Sartre's *Nausea.*

> The absurd is an art which is built not only on interruptions but annoyance. . . . It assumes that annoyance, not love or passion or dedication or climax or interest or mood or mind or even matter, but annoyance, is the foundation of modern existence, and the progressively most common condition for everyone alive is interruption and annoyance. . . . One plans to eat—one has to wait for the food to unfreeze; one calls a friend on quick impulse—the line is busy; start to contemplate—the refrigerator will begin to speak; look to pour a friend a drink—the telephone will ring; begin to watch a show—a commercial comes in! . . . we are talking of modern man's ability to swallow nausea . . . his consciousness is formed on collisions and interruptions. . . . The children who came after the Second World War grew up . . . on interruption—so the arts of the mid-century are the arts of the absurd and deal with categories and hierarchies of discontinuity and the style of their breaks. Art is here on earth to uplift us, to encourage the religious and the nonreligious to feel a heavenly glow—so declared the caretakers of art for two thousand years. But now art is a

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> heart pill—nitroglycerine—it binds shattered nerves together by shattering them all over again with style, with wit, each explosion a guide to building a new nervous system. . . . We live, remember, in a time which interrupts the mood of everything alive. . . . A people deadened by interruption go mad.[2]

The cry of anguish of a Norman Mailer, who believes exhibitionism to be a new variant of autobiography, the protest of the ego against the materialism and categories of a functionalized world, is answered by Saul Bellow, who combines engagement with critical detachment and a more subtle awareness of the limits of literature: "I think that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers had a true understanding of social problems," Bellow states, "but that in the twentieth century the writers have left this to the specialists. If they have anything to say at all, they reflect the position of their profession rather than true understanding. They don't study these questions for themselves. They don't do their homework."

THE DIVIDING LINE between engagement and enragement has never been quite clear, not even with the Surrealists. Categorizations, including these two, are for temporary use, an attempt to define relations, and no more. It may be useful in some contexts to distinguish between the committed and the angry; yet the difference is anything but clear-cut. The engaged is possessed of a sense of responsibility. For him man, in Malraux's words, begins with his fellow man. The enraged begins with himself. But does any writer completely fit into one or the other category? Simone de Beauvoir tells us that Sartre loathes society but does not loathe loathing it. And Sartre himself has said that to his dying day he will continue to hate the bourgeoisie of which he is a product. In his writings this near-rage, a hatred against something within himself he cannot overcome, seems larger than his love of the oppressed. If in bourgeois France the lot of the proletariat improves, if workers who become the beneficiaries of a welfare state turn their backs on the class struggle, if they become petty-bourgeois, Sartre is not happy with this step forward; instead, he begins to hate the spirit of the bourgeoisie in the masses and goes in search of new, still unspoiled "wretched of the earth." He and Frantz Fanon thought to have found them among the colonialized, the underdeveloped peoples, and on them Sartre pinned his hopes for the destruction of the European bourgeoisie.

He had counted on this revolutionary force in the Algerian War, and when the end of this war brought independence to Algeria but failed to bring revolution to France, he decried the outcome. Dionys Mascolo, a leading exponent of Sartreism in the fifties, complained in *Le Nouvel Observateur* of November 1, 1967, that the OAS [the reactionary pro-Algerian forces] had given up too soon. The Algerians, who did not feel obligated to become the executioners of Sartre's sentence over the bourgeoisie, soon had a better rapport with French officials than with the French intellectuals who had run grave risks for their cause. They accepted French credits and expelled French agitators.

To Sartre it seemed that the great hopes of the radical revolution were sold out for paltry immediate gains. But what do we find when we look at Sartre and his circle? Because their hatred of the bourgeoisie no longer finds an echo among the "disinherited," indignant masses, it turns into hatred of the Americanized mass civilization of stupefaction, of false contentment, and myopic moderation. We begin to discover similarities between the intellectual who attacks mass society from the vantage point of the far Left and the intellectual in league with the aristocrat who fights the new mass society from the Right because he fears the decline of traditional values. The intellectual who becomes engaged without taking into account the possible response of those whose spokesman he

[2] Norman Mailer, *Cannibals and Christians* (New York: The Dial Press, 1966), pp. 246 ff.

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believed himself to be is likely to be pushed into an isolation in which engagement easily turns into "rage."

Sartre has some of the traits of the enraged; Julien Gracq believes that he tends to negate things generally and that this tendency will ultimately lead to the negation of his own work and reputation. One is reminded of Flaubert's constant rage against the stolid bourgeoisie of his time. For years Sartre has been working on a book about Flaubert, the bourgeois who hated the bourgeoisie yet was part of it, and there are striking similarities between Flaubert's and Sartre's impotent rage. Moreover, there is an internal connection between impotence and rage on the one hand and engagement and hope for change on the other.

Sartre's longest work is a study of Jean Genet. Genet has been called a Nazi writer because of his sensual identification with sadistic SS characters. This is an arguable point, but there can be no doubt that Genet is possessed by rage, that he identifies with power and with the "ceremonial of power," and that this identification might well manifest itself in the worship of the most arbitrary and sadistic forces. Yet Genet's *Les Nègres* and *Les Paravents* were nonetheless accepted as "engaged theater," and found enthusiastic response among the Left.

Genet's theater offers the opportunity to point out an extraliterary perspective. Could it be that the ambivalence between these two reactions—between the consciously thought out and the emotionally conditioned—is connected with the fact that in the past ten years the class struggles more and more have tended to turn into race struggles and that the automatic, unproblematical equation of skin color and unfulfilled demands has changed the style of activist literature? Thus Hitler's politically obsessive world in which "alien races" are candidates for enslavement or extermination becomes the precursor of a world in which these emotionally primitive contrasts play an increasingly decisive role. Genet celebrates the victory of oppressed Negroes and Algerian fellahim over their white oppressors; he identifies with this victory. However, in *Les Paravents,* it is a victory of death rather than a triumph of revolution.

IN AMERICAN BLACK LITERATURE the road leads from the Marxist-revolutionary ideas of Richard Wright to the prophetic sermonizing of James Baldwin, and to Leroi Jones, the Black Power playwright whose works celebrate a kind of revenge on the whites. And then there are the very different French Negro writings, ranging from novels of social criticism to the exaltation of *négritude* by Léopold Senghor, the President of Senegal, and Aimé Césaire, the Martinique deputy. *Négritude,* and not the demands for equality, now hold the stage. This is an orgiastic literature completely unlike the engaged literature we have come to know, yet nonetheless it seeks to be politically effective.

Engaged literature embodies the conviction that all men are brothers and that this constitutes a claim to equality. The transfer of social differences to the international scene —as a conflict between developed and underdeveloped nations or between the white race and others—represents an attempt on the part of nations to find their identity in difference, or in the right to be different. Frantz Fanon asks the Africans to refrain from imitating the West (for what would be the point of ousting the colonizers under whom material conditions might be better?) and to find dignity in their own mode of life. In the literature of Black Power, the dividing line between engagement and enragement has been eradicated.

If we assume Marxism to be an intellectual commitment and fascism an emotional response, we will note that governments have arisen in the so-called developing nations which present a cross between the two. Yesterday's Sukarno and Nkrumah, today's

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Nasser—where is the dividing line between an emotionally conditioned leadership cult, an identification with a living savior, and social revolutionary goals? This obliteration of differences has presented the intellectuals in Europe and America with a new problem.

Thus a literature of "engagement," as for example Peter Weiss's *Lusitanische Popanz,* may still be possible for the remnants of the colonial empire, but it is no longer possible in decolonized countries calling themselves revolutionary.

The desire of these countries to be different rules out an emotional identification among leftists in the West. Where the attempt at identity is nevertheless made, it is an escape from one's own society rather than the common pursuit of a defined goal. German students hate the Shah, French students the rulers of Bolivia. Are their protests manifestations of an all-encompassing internationalism or of doubts about the chance for radical politics in their own countries?

From the perspective of history it might be said that as far back as the Enlightenment engaged literature presupposed a bourgeois world in which established moral authorities, particularly the Church, are vanishing, while writers as well as other intellectuals emerge as a moral force toward which the bourgeoisie and later the other classes can turn.

Writers become an agency of authority, a power against and among other powers, and like other powers they have definite ideas of what makes for justice and injustice. They believe in a connection between intellectual and social rationality, they are the spokesmen of those who want to expand the realm of reason and understanding.

The intellectuals are able to become the spokesmen of the silent and powerless classes, but they cannot remain its leaders once these groups win complete or even partial power. The early stages of the socialist revolution brought forth a remarkable number of literary critics, from Lafargue and Franz Mehring to Plekhanov and (in Rumania) Dobrogeanu Gherea. Literary criticism constitutes a major portion of the writings of the Socialist Léon Blum and the Communist Gramsci. Trotsky's critical writings fill two big volumes. In England the reform movement of the Labor party was closely linked to the Fabians, to writers like Wells and Shaw. The engaged literary critic is often a forerunner of a direct political engagement, as for example Georg Lukacs, Kurt Eisner, and Gustav Landauer in Germany. Once the silent to whom the littérateurs have given voice come to power, they look for defenders of their interests, not for ideologues. And once they have gained power, the writer no longer sees in them the personification of suffering humanity.

The new power conflicts leave little room for the ardor of engagement. The writer is thrown back to the problematical and tense relationship between truth and power, and ultimately to the question of the distance he must keep in order to comprehend and describe society. The conflict between the private and public man, between individual and citizen, which both Rousseau and Marx sought to eliminate, arises once more and forms the basis of the social consciousness of the writer.

A NUMBER of contemporary German writers, particularly Günter Grass, are attempting an engagement without rage. Grass has worked for reform within the framework of a moderate workers' party. Although he has succeeded in making the separation between novelist and politically engaged citizen which Orwell recommended, his example at the same time shows the limits of the "engaged" posture of the writer. In his effort to support the Social Democratic party, Grass stressed all those factors which in his eyes set the SPD apart from any other German party —while at the same time the party was trying to persuade the voters that it was a party just like any other, and everyone except the

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"writers' group" worked toward coalition with the Christian Democrats. This would indicate that the engaged writer cannot serve without laying down moral conditions, if not for himself then by postulating such general values as "decency," conditions which, however, go beyond what the power they wish to serve is willing to grant.

Hans Magnus Enzensberger, writing in the *Times Literary Supplement* (London), called the "engagement" of the German writers' Group 47 a complete failure for it had become obvious, he said, that a nonrevolutionary road to progress no longer existed.

In 1966, Enzensberger, in a reply to Peter Weiss, was highly critical of a pseudo-activist identification with revolutions in far-off places:

> Our self-appointed models demonstrate their solidarity with the underdog. They proclaim their beliefs. We others, on the other hand, sit in our comfortable apartments. After all, we only write. Perhaps we go to Cuba or the Soviet Union, but only as visitors; perhaps we hold public readings in Leipzig, but then we again take the interzone train [to West Germany].
>
> All that is nothing but theory, nothing but words. At most, a television appearance, a few demonstrations. At most, we pay our own air fare on our inspection tours of socialism. . . . Go to Vietnam or Peru or spend twenty years carrying on revolutionary warfare! You think what is happening here and what's happening there is "basically the same thing." I am of a different opinion. I don't think dying in a mine in Angola is basically the same thing as reading statistics about Angolan mineworkers. You, gentlemen, are readers of statistics. So am I. Not everyone has the gift of scattering declarations of belief around. Since Peter Weiss and others have asked me to own up to my convictions, I wish to tell them that the diverse souls in their and my breasts are of no interest politically. I can do without the moral rearmament of the Left. I am no idealist. I prefer arguments to credos. I prefer doubts to sentiment. I hate revolutionary prattle.

Enzensberger's open letter published by the *New York Review of Books* announcing his intention to leave the United States and his decision to spend some time in Cuba is more in keeping with the political style of the Peter Weiss he attacked in 1966. After all, the American intellectuals and universities stood in the forefront of the fight against the Vietnam War. To picture the United States, at a time when it has become the arena of major political differences, as a monolith shrouded in pseudoliberalism is, if I may say so, rather Teutonic and romantic, the typical reaction of a nonpolitical person. A later statement by Enzensberger would indicate that he has lost the sense of proportion that marked his past writings. Germany, he said, had had a regime which sought to exterminate the Jews and the unfit. That regime did not last. "Neither should a government that beats up its students and young workers be allowed to survive."

The comparison between the treatment of students and young workers in West Germany today and the fate of the Jews under Hitler seems to me—and probably not only to me—an unfortunate one. In a poll conducted by the *Spiegel,* many writers, including those of the Left, replied to Enzensberger as he had himself answered Peter Weiss.

In Sartre the ambivalence between rebellious hatred and revolutionary ideas, between expression and responsibility, is tangible. But in the case of writers who were close to fascism—Ezra Pound, D. H. Lawrence, Wyndham Lewis, Yeats—we find more than rage, more than merely revolt and outcry. Unlike Céline, Pound was not simply obsessed. In his search for a conception about the evils of capitalism, he came across the Canadian social-credit movement which, though not explicitly fascist, resembled early National Socialism. Pound supported this movement with a dogged determination. He did not simply voice indignation over the evils of capitalism; he sought a cure. He may

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have been ill-informed and may have oversimplified—nobody has been so harsh in condemning his past mistakes as Pound himself—but still he tried to arrive at an understanding of the society and economy.

Did the vastly greater number of writers who opted for socialism possess greater understanding and deeper insight into the problems of the economy than Pound? At least, let the question be asked. True, socialism is more than merely a prescription for the cure of economic ills; it offers an exalted vision of the future. However, the possibility of acquiring an exact understanding of society—a possibility that was still open to the Encyclopedists and on which they based their recommendations for change—is becoming foreclosed to the nonspecialist. The gap between engagement and expert knowledge may not be a valid criterion in the approach to moral issues, but things have changed. Bertolt Brecht in his conversations with Walter Benjamin raised the issue of a resurgence of a medieval monarchy within socialism, thereby carefully touching upon the entire problem of engagement, which in Stalin's empire was apt to lead to an alliance with a strange and mysterious power.

The spread of engaged literature to colonial, semicolonial, or excolonial peoples is another matter, and its spread to the Communist-ruled countries of the East yet another, one so vast and complex that we can do no more than hint at it. There, writers have worked to create a legal base for individual freedom, above all their own freedom of expression. Their engagement concerns their interests as writers but it also goes beyond that. In these countries, there is a popular response in which—particularly in Czechoslovakia—writers have been the traditional spokesmen for the masses and for progress, and they are attempting to set themselves up against the representatives of state power and dogmatism. When the Russian tanks entered Prague, they took positions in front of the Writers Union and the Academy of Science, places which, in the eyes of the invaders, had a high priority.

A peculiar inversion has taken place: Western writers criticize the working class because it is satisfied with paltry gains and has lost sight of the great "solution" to all social problems. And even though the workers may no longer know where their true interests lie, the writer can still consider himself the representative of these interests. Perhaps they are only a handful, yet they are the ones who recognize and fight against the threat of a war that will claim the lives of countless victims.

In the Soviet Union, on the other hand, the engaged writers are accused of seeing only puny individual fates and losing sight of the great line. *Pravda* said that the miserable conditions described by Vitali Siomin, the author of *Seven in the House,* might well be true, but that they were not a proper theme for a writer, because while searching for the small truths he tends to lose sight of the "big truths"—i.e., the progress of socialism. In Russian, the two kinds of truths even have different names: *istina,* the small truth, and *pravda,* the big truth.

Thus even today engagement has totally different points of departure, according to the social framework. Even within a Communist regime differences are to be noted. Sinyavsky, who has since been sentenced to hard labor, published an article in which he took issue with Yevtushenko. His criticism would seem to make clear the difference between considered engagement and emotional reactions. Yevtushenko differentiated between those in the Stalin era who were in camps and those who sent them there as if they were two completely different sets of human beings, the one innocent, the other guilty. Sinyavsky maintained—and his own fate was to endow his reply with painful significance—that such differentiations were meaningless. People who sent others to camps frequently themselves ended up in camps. The difference between the perse-

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cutor and the persecuted often was a matter of accident and could not be explained by facile concepts of guilt and innocence. This debate, reminiscent of Hannah Arendt's concept of the banality of evil, offers a classic demonstration of the necessity to differentiate between rational engagement and pure anger. And let us not forget that in this instance the one who differentiated was one who was persecuted.

The theme of the engaged and the enraged writers relates to the realm of the purely literary and the nonliterary. Both realms are peopled by writers who refuse to remain in an ivory tower—a symbol whose progress from the Psalms to the residence of the "non-engaged" poet I wish I understood! Solitude thereby turns into an advantage.

What helped to make the "engaged" position effective was not its involvement in day-to-day politics but a certain reserve and detachment. It thereby became identified with noble causes—in the case of Zola the fight for justice for Dreyfus, and in the case of Romain Rolland the battle against blind national hatreds—instead of with a wealth of petty annoyances.

The enraged are by definition lonely, even if superficially social. They are prisoners of their anger, their fears, their visions of catastrophe. From the standpoint of "pure literature," both the engaged and enraged tend to dissipate their energies, and many a literary historian has expressed the wish for greater restraint on their part. But this wish is based on a notion that the writer is a writer before he is a man and that he is or should be capable of dismissing everything that distracts him from his work, or interferes too greatly with his creative efforts or aims too directly at extraliterary effects. But no writer from Dante to Hochhuth can be stopped from wishing to consign to hell the popes he dislikes.

IT HAS BEEN SAID that dedication to a great cause and a great idea is not as harmful to a writer as becoming the victim of primitive prejudice or resentment. This contention has been argued most recently by Stephen Spender in an essay entitled "Writers and Politics," in the Summer 1967 *Partisan Review*. Spender belongs to the generation of engaged British writers who went to Spain during the Civil War. In retrospect Spender believes that the writers of his generation and his beliefs betrayed literature more profoundly than Pound, Eliot, D. H. Lawrence, or Yeats, that is, than the tradition-bound, at times reactionary writers. He states:

> In a period when poets seemed imprisoned in their private worlds, their occasional acts of surrender to the excitement of a public world of action in the service of what they could pretend to themselves was a civilizing cause is understandable. But the reactionariness of the "reactionaries" is the weakness, not the strength, of their work. . . . We (and here by "we" I mean the thirties' writers) not only look back on them with reverence, but we also revered them at the time. It is important to understand that we thought of them as a greater generation of more devoted artists. That we did so made us reflect that we were a generation less single-minded in our art, but which had perhaps found a new subject—the social situation. We did not think this could lead to better work than theirs, but on the other hand we saw that young poets could not go on writing esoteric poetry about the end of civilization. Yet their endgames were our beginnings. . . . The liberals, the progressives, the anti-Fascists could not invest their future with a vision of the values of present civilization as great as the reactionaries' vision of past values. . . . The reactionaries cared passionately for past values. Their nostalgia misled them into sympathizing with whatever jack-booted corporal or demagogue set himself up in defense of order. As the history of Ezra Pound shows, the results of this could be tragic. But they did not put literature before politics. . . . They did not, as the anti-Fascist writers did, abandon or postpone their literary tasks.

The engaged writers thus made an even greater sacrifice than they thought, namely

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that of literary integrity. Is this startling thesis acceptable? Numerous counterexamples come to mind: Orwell, Camus, Silone, and in a way Brecht. Engagement and critical detachment are not irreconcilable opposites, just as political freedom can exist in the face of political authority. Yet there is something to be said for Spender's almost masochistic criticism of his generation. The engaged writers of the Left take over entire intellectual systems, and the systems color their work much more strongly than anger colors the work of the enraged. The intellectual permeation of literature by a definite, extraliterary purpose can make much greater inroads than anger and prejudice, which are not necessarily as all-encompassing.

The time has come once more to discard categories. Every writer worthy of the name is a unique being. Generally speaking, the works of the engaged writers show greater intelligence than the works of the enraged. And intelligence holds within itself the possibility of detachment, self-irony, nonadherence to systems. Having arrived at the limits of our differentiation, or perhaps our game, I believe that both categories—*engagé and enragé*—are meaningful, first in the typology of the writer, then in the different historical situations and societies. Today the politically engaged writers are never free of a certain degree of irony turned against themselves. Those who succeed in incorporating this irony into their works come closest to becoming the present-day Enlighteners. We need them.

Translated by JEAN STEINBERG

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H. L. Nieburg

Reversing Technological Innovation

THE PRESENT RUSH OF AUTOMATION and technological change has resulted in a cultural adjustment that resists the "tech-fixers." It tends to preserve older values and the incorrigibility of human nature. For a contrary trend accompanies the "tech-fixing" syndrome, a kind of human defense mechanism against efficiency, speed-up, and convenience that undermines both positive and negative effects of innovation. This trend toward the reversal principle is most clearly apparent in the recent pursuits of technology: every new offensive weapon begets a defensive system or forces another, new competitive system into being—erasing, in either case, incremental advantages and sometimes rendering whole systems obsolete. The tech-fixers' common response to this process is to accelerate the innovation process as though to outdistance the reversal principle.

Such a reversal principle is apparent in the nuclear stalemate. Today's great powers must arm themselves with arsenals of versatile missilry and nuclear bombs. This generates the science-technology race but at the same time renders each additional gain both more expensive and less relevant to present military requirements and diplomacy. Yet, while weapons become more destructive and sophisticated, the actual conflict reverts to earlier and more primitive military tactics and hardware. In the late 1960's, we see the aircraft manufacturers reaching back to types of pre-World War II and even World War I aircraft for the limited warfare in Southeast Asian jungles and military needs throughout the underdeveloped world. And well-trained and -supplied soldiers in the field find it impossible to cope with poison bamboo spikes and booby traps made of tree limbs.

The reversal effect in warfare is well-known and has been extensively analyzed. There is a tendency to regard it as highly exceptional, an accidental side issue to the strategic technological stalemate between Russia and the United States. But there is persuasive evidence that far from being exceptional, the reversal effect is universal. Through the same mechanism that triggers the military hardware race, international diplomacy finds its own level and searches for advantages in less dangerous occasions for conflict. The urge to imperialism that motivated the great Western powers for 300 years resulted from the balance-of-power stalemate in the cockpit of Europe. The scene of tension and conflict often shifted to the world's remote reaches where the great powers competed to colonize tribal regions through the most primitive methods of violence, trade, and persuasion. In this sense, the trend toward present-day interventionism—and its concept of the task of policing the process of political change in the new nations—results from the same dynamic that once was known as Western Imperialism.

But the reversal principle can be generalized beyond diplomacy and warfare. It can be seen in such developments as the return to handwork and custom labor in the production of electronic systems, aircraft, and sophisticated machines of all sorts. It can be seen in the trend of highly-skilled scientist-engineers to work as salesmen and wildcat promoters.

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The Process of Degradation

THE REVERSAL PRINCIPLE can be seen in the tendency toward the breakdown of large automated systems like the electric power distribution grid of the nation. During the last ten years most of the switching mechanisms, which balance surges and peaks of power among regional systems, have been automated. This improves efficiency and reliability; but it also amplifies minor failures which now can result in major power blackouts that may affect vast sections of the United States. The causes of such power failures are hard to detect, and an unprecedented amount of time is now required to trace the source of malfunction.

Superior, next-generation computer-surveillance and -control systems are designed and superimposed upon a flawed older generation of machines, and so the problem is aggravated. Yet the ultimate controller must be man, though his attention and skill tend to be devalued by the awesome speed and imperturbability of the machines. Man puts his trust into the machines because "they cannot fail," and so his own adaptive capabilities atrophy. But automatic systems are incapable of adaptive behavior in unprogrammed situations which, when they come (and ultimately they must), undoubtedly will bring augmented blackouts and disaster.

In the same way, the vigilance of electronic early-warning systems has been downgraded by the necessity for fail-safe devices; without these the world would face nuclear catastrophe, precipitated by radar echoes from the moon or by the migration of geese. And if the fail-safe is too safe, it will fail to react properly in the situation for which it was designed. This problem results in further paradoxes: the need to devalue the fail-safe system in order to avoid undermining its deterrent value—and the necessity for ourselves and our enemies to mutually devalue our deterrents, so that we all may be safe from accidental or preventive attack.

The same reversal principle operates in the magnificent new computerized systems that are keeping track of all the ships at sea, all the planes in the sky, all the satellites, boosters, and space junk in orbit around the earth; all the systems that are processing the fire, theft, casualty, and life insurance policies issued by major companies; all the systems routing long-distance telephone calls, setting newspaper type, making sausages, mixing cakes and cement, preparing weather forecasts, directing city traffic, diagnosing illnesses, and cashing most of the checks in the nation.

Should we introduce a fail-safe system in all these activities in order to prevent the augmented disaster of a breakdown, we would find ourselves returning to smaller, multiple, and segmented systems with human intelligence once again operating at many interfaces. But this is not the direction we have chosen. The technology of our advanced civilization is now so highly articulate and complex that, in the words of Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, ". . . New York City . . . had a little snow [yesterday] which wouldn't be enough where I live to even entice a child to take a sled out and yet it snarled up the traffic, the power lines came down, the telephone system was in trouble."

THERE IS DANGER IN OVERSPECIALIZATION; man's unique survival reflex has been flexibility, his ability to adapt to change. A society organized as a rigid megamachine, wedded to a blind, high-speed, narrowly specialized process of technological change, will forfeit some of its options for the future. Any society that is overly dependent upon one or two major staples suffers instability. A society that considers science and technology as separate and apart, exempt from the process of public criticism, imposes a fixed charge on the entire community which will dominate the flavor of its culture. To reserve our options we must reject the "tech-fix" mentality, and assess

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and control the rate and direction of change according to standards of comparative value.

In every area where new technology challenges human needs, man finds ways of circumventing progress. A good example is the field of private communications. Snooping, in all its varieties, has become a normal part of government investigation, private legal action, and industrial espionage. The technology of eavesdropping and wiretapping has outpaced all the means for control and detection. A solution cannot be found through legislation, since the very ease and low cost of snooping makes it so simple to evade enforcement. Under such conditions, new laws are bound to be futile. So long as the technology for the invasion of private communications continues to improve in efficiency, decreases in cost, is easier to install and operate than to detect—and while there is a market for such information—enforcement will remain spotty and ineffective at best.

But the private man finds ways of overcoming the technological advantages of the snooper. The new world of professional wiretappers—eavesdroppers, countereavesdroppers, and double-agent eavesdroppers—in government, private industry, and private lives force him to go underground, to adopt evasion techniques in private communications as a normal way of life. Evasion and nonuse of communications conveniences becomes for some a regular pattern which defeats bugging and counterbugging. And so the reversal principle generates a defensive cultural adjustment which, as a way of preserving the coin of communication, in turn degrades the technology itself. As in professional spying, confidential private or business communications return to the primitive conditions of whispered words in crowded airports or noisy bathrooms—the antithesis of technological convenience and progress.

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN about the impact on ecology and the negative environmental toll which continues to mount throughout the world. The first fruits of industrialization are spread abroad, dramatically cut infant mortality and then generate an explosive population increase. This in turn widens rather than narrows the development gap between the advanced and the backward areas of the world, sharpening all the political antagonisms that arise from the fact of malnutrition. In low-calorie countries, population since World War II has increased faster than food production. The result is that most of these areas now suffer a lower per-capita food intake than they did at a lower level of technology prior to World War II. Similarly, as growing technological change sweeps over the Western world, conservation of air and water purity becomes a central issue of mankind's future. The squandering and pollution of environmental resources in effect will result in a larger government role, apart from all the other factors of social integration and centralization.

The reversal principle is inseparable from scientific and technological change. In an ideological search for infinite security against war, want, and weariness, innovation must face the fact that the search itself may be futile. Rejecting the ideological tenets of tech-fixing, the body politic and its praetitioners must force an assessment of specific proposals and problems. The reversal principle is expensive and exasperating; nevertheless, it promotes a healthy and dependable human reaction that finds ways of subverting the megamachine to more humane, if primitive, realities. Science and technology constitute the basis of the modern industrial state. Yet the key problem of advanced economies is to continuously juggle and balance the contradiction between the rate of change and the economics of change. The input-output cost must be judged in terms of the overall human condition and social policy. Change in itself is unavoidable and necessary; but too rapid or uncritical a

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change passes a point of diminishing returns and becomes too costly to sustain.

Vietnam: the Archetype of Reversal

AS CONDUCTED SINCE 1965, the warfare in Vietnam developed into a testing ground for highly sophisticated technology and massive striking power versus elemental and primitive forces of political organization and loyalties—nylon body-armor for U.S. troops (and for riot squads at home); "people sniffers," a chemical and electronic instrument designed to smell the body odor of concealed enemy troops; a great number of complex fragmentation devices launched against enemy personnel from air and ground platforms of virtually unrestricted range and mobility; night-seeing infra-red radar; defoliation chemicals; etc.

American strategists explain that Vietnam is a testing ground where "International Communism" seeks to demonstrate the efficacy of "wars of national liberation" as a means for communizing all the underdeveloped regions of the world. It might also be said that, from the Vietnamese point of view, the war is a proving ground to demonstrate that the infinite might and power of the U.S. cannot impose a doctrine of "welfare imperialism." It seems, more than anything else, the war has shown that war power is of little use unless it be intelligently controlled and directed at reasonable purposes. To quote General Curtis LeMay on Vietnam strategy, "You can never kill all the flies until you destroy the manure pile." The question is, can you destroy the manure pile?

In the *Myth of the Machine*, Lewis Mumford points out that highly complex technology and integrated societies were in existence long before the development of hardware technology and artificial energy sources. A megamachine can be built with soft human and animal power through rigid social organization, as was demonstrated by the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians. Their problems were not too different from those of the modern megamachine of Western civilization. The megamachine, Mumford asserts, tends toward dehumanized power-centered culture which "monotonously soils" the pages of history "from the rape of Sumer to the blasting of Warsaw and Rotterdam, Tokyo and Hiroshima." He asks: is this association of power and productivity with violence and destruction purely accidental?

The power and magnificence of hardware technology is inordinate in the simultaneity of its reach and power. Man now enjoys new comforts and benefits, but he pays a price. Through better nutrition and sanitation children grow taller and straighter than their parents did; but, while more of them live past infancy, they may ultimately have trouble controlling their weight and die of heart attacks earlier than did their grandparents. The scale of good is indeed augmented, and evil becomes massive and monumental. It may be technology that marks the difference between the random extermination of American Indians when it is compared with the systematic destruction of European Jewry. The difference between Andrew Jackson and Adolph Hitler may so be entirely based upon advances in technology and social integration.

German physicist C. F. von Weizsäcker writes: "The modern world is a tree in which many birds build their nests, and it is an all-consuming fire." This world is blind to its own ambivalence. Weizsäcker likens the inevitability of ambivalence and the half-truths through which man's mental life fluctuates to Jesus' parable of the wheat and the tares: "I have never seen a clearer description of modern times than this growing cornfield in which the tares unavoidably grow up alongside the wheat." There are present in human relations and in each human being great natural forces comparable to hurricanes, earthquakes, and sudden natural disasters. The megamachine sustains a

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magnetic plasma of all the inherent powers of human relations; but this is a volatile fusion not yet fully harnessed and never fully congruent with the requirements of a highly integrated society. In its modern form, the megamachine may suffer the all-consuming fire which destroys the very benefits that should preserve the society.

Foreign policy in the decade of the 60's seemed to be making a strong case for the view that neither the terrible nor the tantalizing tools which science and technology have put at the disposal of the advanced nations can secure them a stable diplomatic position in the world. Great destruction and great expectation are both equally ambiguous and subject to counterproductive reversals.

In the very cloisters of our power and wealth we may be losing the common human basis for understanding and dealing with the more primitive and desperate revolutions and hopes in the backward ghettos of rural counties, urban slums, and in the proud, unsure, and hungry reaches of the underdeveloped world.

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Richard C. Kagan

Taiwan: Another Greece?

In a recent *Newsweek* article the economist Paul Samuelson wrote, "[this nation, economically,] belongs up there with the miracle nations of Japan and Israel . . . [Its] per capita living standards . . . have climbed rapidly relative to Western Europe . . . [and] its 1966 gross national product rose by 8.2 per cent."

Samuelson was writing about Greece, before its recent military coup. His point, however, is equally applicable to Taiwan: Economic development does not necessarily imply or protect the process of democratization. Americans tend to apply a neo-Marxist economic approach to developing nations: i.e., economic growth produces a middle class which develops the political stability that will nurture political democracy. But the recent example in Greece and the present political instability in an economically robust Taiwan invalidate this notion. Taiwan's political instability has its sources in the nature of the ruling Nationalist party (the Kuomintang), the division of the country's intellectuals, and the problems of Presidential succession.

To characterize the intellectuals of Taiwan is a problem of political long division. The first step is to divide mainland Chinese from Taiwanese; thereafter, to divide both groups by generational lines and educational background. The older Chinese intellectuals are mainly concerned with the adaptation of China's cultural heritage to the modern world. They are still involved in the debates which were dramatically thrust forward in the May Fourth movement of 1919. Those debates centered around the values of the Chinese family structure, the rights of women, the tyranny of China's traditional system of rituals and beliefs, and the anachronism of a Chinese system of values in a Western world. Since these arguments surfaced in 1919, the history of China has been rewritten by the Communists, as if all the criticism of Chinese culture had led to the radical policy changes—the family system is greatly modified, the young are the leaders, women have equality, and the Chinese feudal tradition of Confucianism has been replaced by the Chinese proletariat-peasant tradition of Maoism. The historical record on Taiwan is equally distorted: modern history is written to prove the viability of the Chinese spirit over Western machinery, the family system is extolled, and any attack on Chinese traditional culture is considered Communistic.

Until his death in 1962, Hu Shih, a participant in the May Fourth period, a student of John Dewey at Columbia University, and a former ambassador to the United States, was the leading liberal in Taiwan. Although his proclaimed policy of "total Westernization" was somewhat modified to allow for coexistence with selected parts of Chinese culture, he was to many brave mainlanders the champion who challenged the orthodoxy of Chinese tradition. Those people who belong to the Anglo-American educated group attach themselves to Western ideas that are antigovernment and proindividual. They advocate the freedoms of speech, press, and assembly, and the right to establish a loyal political opposition party. On the whole, their program is the result of their reaction to the authoritarian, unscientific, and in many ways irrational system of Taiwan's government. Their liberalism is not necessarily *au courant* with American thinking—they use as models such diverse

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thinkers as the conservative economist Hayek and the socialist Bertrand Russell.

From 1954 to 1960, the organ of this liberal movement was a publication called *Free China*. In 1960, when it developed an opposition party, the editor was immediately arrested and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment. The *Apollo*, a successor publication, was closed down in December 1965 on the vague grounds that it violated the "objectives for publication." Subsequently, the chief writers for both magazines have been forced out of work by the government; their major writings are banned. Many of these writers are now living off money borrowed from friends, and some of them are still under semi-house arrest.

Today's Taiwanese intellectuals are best characterized by their total noninvolvement with questions of the nature and viability of Chinese culture. They are unconcerned with the heritage of the May Fourth movement and seek solutions to China's problems with a much more pragmatic, ahistorical approach. On the whole, they distrust and resent the mainlanders. They do not want to reform the Kuomintang or even establish an opposition party. They want to *abolish* KMT rule over Taiwan, end the civil war with Communist China, put Taiwan into the hands of its residents, and raise it from the fictional status of a province within "the Republic of China" to that of a country in its own right.

The rightist mainlanders are well-represented in the *China Magazine*. Although a minor publication, it is often used by the Party (the Kuomintang) to start movements of censure and repression. This magazine leads in the attack on the former members of *Free China* and the *Apollo*. Because its staff members have connections in the Kuomintang, they have been able to gain access to and publish private letters from Hu Shih's collection which reveal the hesitations, doubts, and criticisms of the Party once expressed by Hu Shih's close friends. And so, after his death, Hu Shih's memoirs and private affairs have become part of the arsenal used to besiege his followers. The rightists maintain that all adverse criticism of China's cultural values and any attempt to criticize the government's policies impedes the national purpose—the return to the mainland.

The editor of the *China Magazine* is Hu Ch'iu-yuan, the leader of the rightists. He was a young Communist in the 1920's and studied in Moscow. While presently serving as a legislative representative from Fukien, he is proving his loyalty by incessantly attacking all liberals and "deviants." Hu Ch'iu-yuan's supporters come from the group of "Marxist" educated Chinese—former Communists or sympathizers and those who were trained in Moscow. Since the death of Hu Shih and the rise of Chiang K'ai-shek's Russian-educated son, their power has grown considerably.

TAIWAN (or Formosa, which is the island's Portuguese name) was settled in the 16th and 17th centuries by Chinese from South China who were fleeing from the mainland's political chaos and economic hardships. The island was run as a frontier outpost by the local gentry and clans. In 1887, China recognized the strategic importance of Taiwan and gave it the status of a province. Some reforms, mainly in taxation, communications, and defense, were instituted by an ambitious military governor. However, in 1895, only eight years later, China was defeated by Japan, and Taiwan was traded to the victor.

Japan's colonial rule provided a hitherto neglected and economically backward island with a strongly developed agricultural base, an efficient system of communications and transportation, a literacy rate of 80 per cent, and an urban middle class. Taiwan now reached an economic development that was second in Asia only to Japan. The political consequences of these improvements were the development of Taiwanese nationalism, a sense of political identity, and a politicized community of intellectuals and businessmen.

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When, in 1945, the Japanese were forced to return Taiwan to China, the Taiwanese welcomed this, for they had always identified themselves racially and culturally with the Chinese and had idealized the democratic political goals of the Republic of China. But the Taiwanese soon realized that they were considered culturally inferior by the Chinese who were exploiting Taiwan.

In 1947 and 1948, Nationalist reprisals against Taiwanese rebellion resulted in the death of 10–20,000 Taiwanese and in involuntary exile for most of the Taiwanese political leaders. As a result of the disappointment with the Nationalist government, Japan's rule is now idealized and Japanese is often preferred to Chinese as the foreign language on the island.

The Taiwanese intellectual is thus caught between identities and political realities. His national identity was forged in opposition to the Japanese, but he is unable to accept the Chinese mainlander ruling class. His answer is to overthrow the KMT by violence and establish a Taiwan for the Taiwanese. The older Taiwanese intellectual was trained in Japan and possesses a sophisticated revolutionary attitude. He understands the need for a tightly knit organization resembling a military chain of command. His problem is that now Taiwan is not in a revolutionary stage and that he has no mass following. The younger Taiwanese intellectual has been trained in America. If he returns to Taiwan (which is rare), he is kept under strict surveillance. But this surveillance hampers him less than his educational background: White America trains pragmatists, not revolutionaries. The young American-educated Taiwanese wants to change the island from within. Yet he has an unclear idea of organization, political alternatives to the Nationalists (the Kuomintang), or the process of change. His main aims are to outlast the life of the KMT, gather a personal following, and then seek change.

Common to all liberal types (Chinese mainlander or Taiwanese, young or old) is the hope to end the civil war with China, shed the military rule of the island, and reorient economic development away from short-range planning and a wavering economy toward long-range planning and a peaceful economy. And the young—be they Taiwanese or mainlanders—share a basic antipathy toward the ruling party—the Kuomintang. Some liberals feel that equal cooperation between mainlanders and Taiwanese can become the basis for an independent Taiwan. This tendency is gaining strength, e.g., the successful attempt to form coalition voting blocs in the capital city, Taipei, to elect a Taiwanese mayor. The KMT's reprisal was to declare the city a federalized area whose mayor would no longer be elected but appointed. The KMT was also quick to destroy this embryonic opposition by enforcing complete political and economic segregation between Chinese mainlanders and Taiwanese. (Businesses are now controlled by one group or another but never shared.)

THE KUOMINTANG (National People's party) was reorganized in 1924 with the help of Russian advice along Communist lines. Its hierarchy, chain of command, and totalitarian nature are traits it shares with the Communist party. Though the leaders of the KMT have written a national constitution which is democratic in form, it has been shelved until "the return to the Mainland." For the present, the country is run under martial law. This situation has been described by one China scholar as a "submerged totalitarianism" where nothing is spelled out, and where crimes are judged and decided on an *ad hoc* and *ad hominem* basis. It has also been estimated that there is one paid informer for every ten Taiwanese.

The legislature is composed of aging KMT mainlanders who were elected in 1947. Since in theory this legislature represents all the provinces of China, another election will have to wait until the mainland is reconquered. (A provincial legislature does exist, but its purse strings, crucial political decisions, and even

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its press releases are entirely controlled by the central government.) The task of the KMT and the legislative representatives has been defined by President Chiang K'ai-shek as helping to "consolidate Taiwan as a base for counterattack, and not to let the implementation of our national task of mainland recovery be interfered with."

The KMT is now in transition from a "liberal" to a more reactionary position. The rightists in the Party are gaining with the rising influence of Chiang Ching-kuo, son of President Chiang K'ai-shek. They constitute a Russian-trained or -oriented group of former Marxists or Communists who vociferously blame the United States for the loss of China, label Professor John K. Fairbank of Harvard University as Mao Tse-tung's right-hand man, and relentlessly attack the former liberal holders of power and influence. One example of Party purgings is the attack on a very popular professor who symbolizes Western learning. This professor, an editor of *Free China* and a follower of Bertrand Russell, was put under semi-house arrest and removed from his teaching position in the fall of 1966. His major books on Chinese culture and the values of Westernization are now banned. Despite job offers from abroad, he has not been allowed to leave Taiwan; the rightists not only detained him but also carried out economic and political reprisals upon his protégés and students.

At the moment liberals within the KMT are wary of speaking out. Yet there is growing criticism of the KMT within and outside the Party. Only personal loyalty to Chiang K'ai-shek has checked open dissension within the ranks. The staff of the *Apollo* magazine and the editor of a major newspaper who was also a high Party official had planned to publish a joint criticism of the arbitrary and dictatorial actions of the Minister of Information who had already closed down several student publications and had falsely accused and black-listed newspaper men as being Communist agents. When the KMT's Central Committee and Chiang K'ai-shek were informed of the forthcoming public criticism, they summoned the editor of the large daily newspaper and advised him to keep all Party criticism both secret and within the Party. The editor of the newspaper withdrew his support from *Apollo* and thus the smaller magazine, refusing to bend, had to bear the brunt of the Party's fury.

CHIANG K'AI-SHEK in many ways *is* the KMT; once he dies the KMT will face a crisis in prestige, strength, and loyalties. The rightists are aware of this problem and are seeking support from outside the Party. The source of their power is Chiang K'ai-shek's son Chiang Ching-kuo.

Chiang Ching-kuo was the first son of Chiang K'ai-shek's first wife, not the present Madame Chiang. Born in 1909, he is now 58 years old. In his youth Chiang Ching-kuo received little formal higher education in China, for at the age of 16 he went to the Soviet Union to attend military school and receive political indoctrination. After staying in Russia for 12 years, he returned home in 1937 and became deputy commander of a military bureau in the province of Kiangsi. Within two years he was supervisory officer of the southern part of that province. His use of the secret police and his puritanical character earned him the sobriquet of "iron commissioner." (In Taiwan he is known less politely as "pig-face.") His personal power has been maintained by his relation to his father, his system of spying and political indoctrination, and his special organization of many personal youth groups. Some of these "youths" are now 40 years old.

Chiang Ching-kuo's main concerns are maintaining security and stability, and protecting the basis of Chinese culture from foreign influences as a way to legitimate future power. The nature of his concerns is evidenced in the recent construction of military block houses right *in* the cities of Taiwan to put down any local disorder. He is well aware

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of the animosity felt toward him by the Taiwanese and is preparing himself against the eventuality of revolt. Ching-kuo has also attempted to control and reduce the autonomy of the liberal Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, the largest and most progressive on the island. His succession to the Presidency seems only impeded by the fact that he is ill with diabetes.

Will the United States government seek a keeper of the peace on Taiwan among the Nationalist generals and allies of Ching-kuo, thereby raising the danger of a renewed Chinese civil war on Taiwan's soil where it is at best a foreign intrusion—or will it look to the Taiwanese for an alternative to a militaristic police state? Such an alternative would mean political resolution of the island's demand for a government based on parliamentary democracy, and a *modus vivendi* to be worked out with the People's Republic of China.

The United States' earlier diplomatic effort, which died with Kennedy and the subsequent rise of Rusk and Johnson, should be revived. This policy, first enunciated by Chester Bowles, not only advocated the neutralization of the off-shore islands but also an independent Sino-Taiwanese nation.* Ambassador Stevenson began maneuvering toward this policy when he pointed out that Taiwan's population and size placed it within the upper 15 per cent of nations in the U.N. and thus it could be considered a nation in itself. We should attempt to end the civil war by reducing military aid to an army that is too small to invade the mainland and too large merely to keep domestic order. Whether or not the ending of the civil war will make Communist China less bellicose, it will force Taiwan to focus more attention on the island's welfare, to move from martial to civil law, and from a military-based economy—90 per cent of the budget is reserved for military expenditures—to a civilian-based economy.

Taiwan's future, if under the rule of Chiang Ching-kuo, however, may not be much different from the present condition of Greece. Taiwan's Minister of Defense will then probably ally himself with military and rightist elements in order to crush all "subversive" forces, which will exacerbate political dissatisfaction. Ching-kuo's accession to the Presidency would mark a shift from party rule to outright military rule. Our economic aid to Taiwan and Taiwan's economic advancement will not mitigate the hardships of Ching-kuo's rule. Unless we begin to open up the question of Taiwan, its citizens will continue to live under an increasingly unstable and politically repressive government.

* For elaboration of this policy see the study by Chen Lung-chu and Harold D. Lasswell, *Formosa, China, and the United Nations* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967).

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C. B. Macpherson

Elegant Tombstones

Milton Friedman's Theory of Capitalism

ACADEMIC political scientists who want their students to think about the problem of liberty and the modern state are properly anxious to have them confront at first hand various contemporary theoretical positions on the relation between freedom and capitalism. The range of positions is wide: at one extreme freedom is held to be incompatible with capitalism; at the other freedom is held to be impossible except in a capitalist society; in between, all sorts of necessary or possible relations are asserted. Different concepts of freedom are involved in some of these positions, similar concepts in others; and different models of capitalism (and of socialism) are sometimes being used. It is clearly important to sort them out. But there is some difficulty in finding adequate theoretical expositions of the second extreme position, which might be called the pure market theory of liberalism. There are very few of them. Probably the most effective, and the one most often cast in this role, is Milton Friedman's *Capitalism and Freedom* (University of Chicago Press, 1962), which is now apt to be treated by political scientists as the classic defense of free-market liberalism. As such it deserves more notice from the political theorists' standpoint than it got on publication, when its technical arguments about the possibility of returning to laissez-faire attracted most attention. Whether or not *Capitalism and Freedom* is now properly treated as the classic defense of the pure market theory of liberalism, it is at least a classic example of the difficulty of moving from the level of controversy about laissez-faire to the level of fundamental concepts of freedom and the market.

The first thing that strikes the political scientist about *Capitalism and Freedom* is the uncanny resemblance between Friedman's approach and Herbert Spencer's. Eighty years ago Spencer opened his *The Man versus the State* by drawing attention to a reversal which he believed had taken place recently in the meaning of liberalism: it had, he said, originally meant individual market freedom as opposed to state coercion, but it had come to mean more state coercion in the supposed interest of individual welfare. Spencer assigned a reason: earlier liberalism had in fact abolished grievances or mitigated evils suffered by the many, and so had contributed to their welfare; the welfare of the many then easily came to be taken by liberals not as a by-product of the real end, the relaxation of restraints, but as the end itself. Spencer regretted this, without offering any evidence that market freedom ever was more basic, or more desired, than the maximization of wealth or of individual welfare. Professor Friedman does the same. *Capitalism and Freedom* opens by drawing attention to the same reversal of meaning, and rejecting it out of hand. "Freedom of the individual, or perhaps of the family" is for him the liberal's "ultimate goal in judging social arrangements" (p. 12). His case is that "a free private enterprise exchange economy," or "competitive capitalism" (p. 13), is both a direct component of freedom, and a necessary though not a sufficient condition of political

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freedom, which he defines as "the absence of coercion of a man by his fellow men" (p. 15).

To maximize this freedom, he argues, governments should be allowed to handle only those matters "which cannot be handled through the market at all, or can be handled only at so great a cost that the use of political channels may be preferable" (p. 25). This would mean government moving out of almost all its welfare and regulatory functions. Controls on, or support of, any prices, wages, interest rates, rents, exports, imports, and amounts produced would all have to go; so would present social security programs, housing subsidy programs, and the like. The functions properly left to governments because the market cannot perform them at all, or perform them well, are summarized:

> A government which maintained law and order, defined property rights, served as a means whereby we could modify property rights and other rules of the economic game, adjudicated disputes about the interpretation of the rules, enforced contracts, promoted competition, provided a monetary framework, engaged in activities to counter technical monopolies and to overcome neighborhood effects widely regarded as sufficiently important to justify government intervention, and which supplemented private charity and the private family in protecting the irresponsible, whether madman or child —such a government would clearly have important functions to perform. The consistent liberal is not an anarchist [p. 34].

No one ever thought that laissez-faire was anarchism; Spencer would scarcely have objected to this list of allowable government functions. But what is this economic game which is supposed to maximize individual freedom? The argument is that competitive capitalism can resolve "the basic problem of social organization," which is "how to coordinate the economic activities of large numbers of people" (p. 12), by voluntary co-operation of individuals as opposed to central direction by state coercion.

In addition to arguing that competitive capitalism is a system of economic freedom and so an important component of freedom broadly understood, Professor Friedman argues that capitalism is a necessary condition of political freedom (and that socialism is incompatible with political freedom). And although he is more concerned with freedom than with equity, he does argue also that the capitalist principle of distribution of the whole product is not only preferable to a socialist principle but is in fact accepted by socialists.

This note deals with (I) an error which vitiates Friedman's demonstration that competitive capitalism co-ordinates men's economic activities without coercion; (II) the inadequacy of his arguments that capitalism is a necessary condition of political freedom and that socialism is inconsistent with political freedom; and (III) the fallacy of his case for the ethical adequacy of the capitalist principle of distribution.

I

FRIEDMAN'S demonstration that the capitalist market economy can co-ordinate economic activities without coercion rests on an elementary conceptual error. His argument runs as follows. He shows first that in a simple market model, where each individual or household controls resources enabling it to produce goods and services either directly for itself or for exchange, there will be production for exchange because of the increased product made possible by specialization. But "since the household always has the alternative of producing directly for itself, it need not enter into any exchange unless it benefits from it. Hence no exchange will take place unless both parties do benefit from it. Co-operation is thereby achieved without coercion" (p. 13). So far, so good. It is indeed clear that in this simple exchange model, assuming rational maximizing behavior by all hands, every exchange will benefit both parties, and hence that no coercion is involved in the decision to produce for exchange or in any act of exchange.

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Professor Friedman then moves on to our actual complex economy, or rather to his own curious model of it:

> As in [the] simple model, so in the complex enterprise and money-exchange economy, co-operation is strictly individual and voluntary, *provided*: (*a*) that enterprises are private, so that the ultimate contracting parties are individuals and (*b*) that individuals are effectively free to enter or not to enter into any particular exchange, so that every transaction is strictly voluntary [p. 14].

One cannot take exception to proviso (*a*): it is clearly required in the model to produce a co-operation that is "strictly individual." One might, of course, suggest that a model containing this stipulation is far from corresponding to our actual complex economy, since in the latter the ultimate contracting parties who have the most effect on the market are not individuals but corporations, and moreover, corporations which in one way or another manage to opt out of the fully competitive market. This criticism, however, would not be accepted by all economists as self-evident: some would say that the question who has most effect on the market is still an open question (or is a wrongly posed question). More investigation and analysis of this aspect of the economy would be valuable. But political scientists need not await its results before passing judgment on Friedman's position, nor should they be tempted to concentrate their attention on proviso (*a*). If they do so they are apt to miss the fault in proviso (*b*), which is more fundamental, and of a different kind. It is not a question of the correspondence of the model to the actual; it is a matter of the inadequacy of the proviso to produce the model.

Proviso (*b*) is "that individuals are effectively free to enter or not to enter into any particular exchange," and it is held that with this proviso "every transaction is strictly voluntary." A moment's thought will show that this is not so. The proviso that is required to make every transaction strictly voluntary is *not* freedom not to enter into any *particular* exchange, but freedom not to enter into any exchange *at all*. This, and only this, was the proviso that proved the simple model to be voluntary and noncoercive; and nothing less than this would prove the complex model to be voluntary and noncoercive. But Friedman is clearly claiming that freedom not to enter into any *particular* exchange is enough: "The consumer is protected from coercion by the seller because of the presence of other sellers with whom he can deal. . . . The employee is protected from coercion by the employer because of other employers for whom he can work . . ." (pp. 14–15).

One almost despairs of logic, and of the use of models. It is easy to see what Professor Friedman has done, but it is less easy to excuse it. He has moved from the simple economy of exchange between independent producers, to the capitalist economy, without mentioning the most important thing that distinguishes them. He mentions money instead of barter, and "enterprises which are intermediaries between individuals in their capacities as suppliers of services and as purchasers of goods" (pp. 13-14), as if money and merchants were what distinguished a capitalist economy from an economy of independent producers. What distinguishes the capitalist economy from the simple exchange economy is the separation of labor and capital, that is, the existence of a labor force without its own sufficient capital, and therefore without a choice as to whether to put its labor in the market or not. Friedman would agree that where there is no choice there is coercion. His attempted demonstration that capitalism co-ordinates without coercion therefore fails.

Since all his specific arguments against the welfare and regulatory state depend on his case that the market economy is not coercive, the reader may spare himself the pains (or, if an economist, the pleasure) of attending to the careful and persuasive reasoning by which he seeks to establish the minimum to which coercion could be reduced by reducing or discarding each of the main regulatory and wel-

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fare activities of the state. None of this takes into account the coercion involved in the separation of capital from labor, or the possible mitigation of this coercion by the regulatory and welfare state. Yet it is because this coercion can in principle be reduced by the regulatory and welfare state, and thereby the amount of effective individual liberty be increased, that liberals have been justified in pressing, in the name of liberty, for infringements on the pure operation of competitive capitalism.

II

WHILE THE BULK of *Capitalism and Freedom* is concerned with the regulatory and welfare state, Friedman's deepest concern is with socialism. He undertakes to demonstrate that socialism is inconsistent with political freedom. He argues this in two ways: (1) that competitive capitalism, which is of course negated by socialism, is a necessary (although not a sufficient) condition of political freedom; (2) that a socialist society is so constructed that it cannot guarantee political freedom. Let us look at the two arguments in turn.

1. THE ARGUMENT that competitive capitalism is necessary to political freedom is itself conducted on two levels, neither of which shows a necessary relation.

(*a*) The first, on which Friedman properly does not place very much weight, is a historical correlation. No society that has had a large measure of political freedom "has not also used something comparable to a free market to organize the bulk of economic activity" (p. 9). Professor Friedman rightly emphasizes "how limited is the span of time and the part of the globe for which there has ever been anything like political freedom" (p. 9); he believes that the exceptions to the general rule of "tyranny, servitude and misery" are so few that the relation between them and certain economic arrangements can easily be spotted. "The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Western world stand out as striking exceptions to the general trend of historical development. Political freedom in this instance clearly came along with the free market and the development of capitalist institutions" (pp. 9-10). Thus, for Professor Friedman, "history suggests . . . that capitalism is a necessary condition for political freedom" (p. 10).

The broad historical correlation is fairly clear, though in cutting off the period of substantial political freedom in the West at the "early twentieth century" Friedman seems to be slipping into thinking of economic freedom and begging the question of the relation of political freedom to economic freedom. But granting the correlation between the emergence of capitalism and the emergence of political freedom, what it may suggest to the student of history is the converse of what it suggests to Friedman: i.e., it may suggest that political freedom was a necessary condition for the development of capitalism. Capitalist institutions could not be fully established until political freedom (ensured by a competitive party system with effective civil liberties) had been won by those who wanted capitalism to have a clear run: a liberal state (political freedom) was needed to permit and facilitate a capitalist market society.

If this is the direction in which the causal relation runs, what follows (assuming the same relation to continue to hold) is that freedom, or rather specific kinds and degrees of freedom, will be or not be maintained according as those who have a stake in the maintenance of capitalism think them useful or necessary. In fact, there has been a complication in this relation. The liberal state which had, by the mid-nineteenth century in England, established the political freedoms needed to facilitate capitalism, was not democratic: that is, it had not extended political freedom to the bulk of the people. When it did so later, it began to abridge market freedom. The more extensive the political freedom, the less extensive the economic freedom became. At any rate, the historical correlation scarcely

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suggests that capitalism is a necessary condition for political freedom.

(*b*) Passing from historical correlation, which "by itself can never be convincing," Friedman looks for "logical links between economic and political freedom" (pp. 11-12). The link he finds is that "the kind of economic organization that provides economic freedom directly, namely, competitive capitalism, also promotes political freedom because it separates economic power from political power and in this way enables the one to offset the other" (p. 9). The point is developed a few pages later. The greater the concentration of coercive power in the same hands, the greater the threat to political freedom (defined as "the absence of coercion of a man by his fellow men"). The market removes the organization of economic activity from the control of the political authority. It thus reduces the concentration of power and "enables economic strength to be a check to political power rather than a reinforcement" (p. 15).

Granted the validity of these generalizations, they tell us only that the market *enables* economic power to offset rather than reinforce political power. They do not show any necessity or inherent probability that the market *leads to* the offsetting of political power by economic power. We may doubt that there is any such inherent probability. What can be shown is an inherent probability in the other direction, i.e., that the market leads to political power being used not to offset but to reinforce economic power. For the more completely the market takes over the organization of economic activity, that is, the more nearly the society approximates Friedman's ideal of a competitive capitalist market society, where the state establishes and enforces the individual right of appropriation and the rules of the market but does not interfere in the operation of the market, the more completely is political power being used to reinforce economic power.

Friedman does not see this as any threat to political freedom because he does not see that the capitalist market necessarily gives coercive power to those who succeed in amassing capital. He knows that the coercion whose absence he equates with political freedom is not just the physical coercion of police and prisons, but extends to many forms of economic coercion, e.g., the power some men may have over others' terms of employment. He sees the coercion possible (he thinks probable) in a socialist society where the political authority can enforce certain terms of employment. He does not see the coercion in a capitalist society where the holders of capital can enforce certain terms of employment. He does not see this because of his error about freedom not to enter into any particular exchange being enough to prove the uncoercive nature of entering into exchange at all.

The placing of economic coercive power and political coercive power in the hands of different sets of people, as in the fully competitive capitalist economy, does not lead to the first checking the second but to the second reinforcing the first. It is only in the welfare-state variety of capitalism, which Friedman would like to have dismantled, that there is a certain amount of checking of economic power by political power.

The logical link between competitive capitalism and political freedom has not been established.

2. FRIEDMAN ARGUES also that a socialist society is so constructed that it cannot guarantee political freedom. He takes as the test of political freedom the freedom of individuals to propagandize openly for a radical change in the structure of society: in a socialist society the test is freedom to advocate the introduction of capitalism. He might have seemed to be on more realistic ground had he taken the test to be freedom to advocate different policies within the framework of socialism, e.g., a faster or slower rate of socialization, of industrialization, etc.: it is on these matters that the record of actual social-

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ist states has been conspicuously unfree. However, since the denial of freedom of such advocacy has generally been on the ground that such courses would lead to or encourage the reintroduction of capitalism, such advocacy may all be subsumed under his test.

We may grant at once that in the present socialist states (by which is meant those dominated by Communist parties) such freedom is not only not guaranteed but is actively denied. Professor Friedman does not ask us to grant this, since he is talking not about particular socialist states but about any possible socialist state, about the socialist state as such; nevertheless the actual ones are not far from his mind, and we shall have to refer to them again. His case that a socialist state as such cannot guarantee political freedom depends on what he puts in his model of the socialist state. He uses in fact two models. In one, the government is the sole empolyer and the sole source from which necessary instruments of effective political advocacy (paper, use of printing presses, halls) can be had. In the other, the second stipulation is dropped.

It is obvious that in either model a government which wished to prevent political advocacy could use its economic monopoly position to do so. But what Professor Friedman is trying to establish is something different, namely, that its economic monopoly position would render any socialist government, whatever its intentions, incapable of guaranteeing this political freedom. It may be granted that in the first model this would be so. It would be virtually impossible, for a government which desired to guarantee freedom of political advocacy, to provide paper, presses, halls, etc., to all comers in the quantities they thought necessary.

But in the second model this would not apply. The second model appears when Professor Friedman is urging a further argument, namely, that a government which desired to guarantee free political advocacy could not effectively make it possible because, in the absence of capitalism and hence of many and widely dispersed private fortunes, there would be no sufficient source of private funds with which to finance propaganda activities, and the government itself could not feasibly provide such funds. Here there is assumed to be a market in paper, presses, and halls: the trouble is merely shortage of funds which advocates can use in these markets.

This second argument need not detain us, resting as it does on the unhistorical assumption that radical minority movements are necessarily unable to operate without millionaire angels or comparably few sources of large funds. Nor, since the second argument assumes that paper, presses, and halls can be purchased or hired, need we challenge the assumption put in the first model, that these means of advocacy are unobtainable in the socialist state except by asking the government for them.

We have still to consider the effect of the other stipulation, which is made in both models: that the government is the sole employer. Accepting this as a proper stipulation for a socialist model, the question to be answered is: does the monopoly of employment itself render the government incapable (or even less capable than it otherwise would be) of safeguarding political freedom? Friedman expects us to answer yes, but the answer is surely no. A socialist government which wished to guarantee political freedom would not be prevented from doing so by its having a monopoly of employment. Nor need it even be tempted to curtail political freedom by virtue of that monopoly. A government monopoly of employment can only mean (as Friedman allows) that the government and all its agencies are, together, the only employers. A socialist government can, by devolution of the management of industries, provide effective alternative employment opportunities. True, a government which wished to curtail or deny the freedom of radical political advocacy could use its monopoly of employment to do so. But such a government has so many other ways of doing it that the

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presence or absence of this way is not decisive.

It is not the absence of a fully competitive labor market that may disable a socialist government from guaranteeing political freedom; it is the absence of a firm will to do so. Where there's a will there's a way, and for all that Friedman has argued to the contrary, the way need have nothing to do with a fully competitive labor market. The real problem of political freedom in socialism has to do with the will, not the way. The real problem is whether a socialist state could ever have the will to guarantee political freedom. This depends on factors Friedman does not consider, and until they have been assessed, questions about means have an air of unreality, as has his complaint that Western socialists have not faced up to the question of means. We shall return to both of these matters after looking briefly at the factors which are likely to affect such a will to political freedom.

On the question of the will, we cannot say (nor indeed does Friedman suggest) that a will to guarantee political freedom is impossible, or even improbable, in a socialist state. True, if one were to judge by existing socialist states controlled by Communist parties, the improbability would be high. (We are speaking here of day-to-day political freedom, which is the question Friedman has set, and not of the will to achieve some higher level of freedom in an ultimately transformed society.) But if we are to consider, as Friedman is doing, socialist states that might emerge in the West, we should notice the differences between the forces in the existing ones and those inherent in possible future Western ones.

There are some notable differences. First, the existing socialist states were all established in underdeveloped societies, in which the bulk of the people did not have the work habits and other cultural attributes needed by a modern industrial state. They have had to change an illiterate, largely unpolitical, peasant population into a literate, politicized, industrially oriented people. While doing this they have had to raise productivity to levels which would afford a decent human minimum, and even meet a rising level of material expectations. The pressures against political freedom that are set up by these factors are obvious. In the few instances, e.g., Czechoslovakia, where socialism did not start from such an underdeveloped base, it started under an external domination that produced equal though different pressures against political freedom. None of these pressures would be present in a socialist state which emerged independently in an already highly developed Western society.

Second, in the existing socialist states the effort to establish socialism has been made in the face of the hostility of the Western powers, whether manifested in their support of counterrevolution or in "encirclement" or "cold war." The ways in which this fact has compounded the pressures against political freedom due to the underdeveloped base are obvious. Presumably the force of this hostility would be less in the case of future socialist takeovers in Western countries.

Third, the existing socialist states were all born in revolution or civil war, with the inevitable aftermath that "deviations" from the line established from time to time by the leadership (after however much or little consultation) tend to be treated as treason against the socialist revolution and the socialist state. We may at least entertain the possibility of a socialist takeover in an advanced Western nation without revolution or civil war (as Professor Friedman presumably does, else he would not be so concerned about the "creeping socialism" of the welfare state). A socialist state established without civil war would not be subject to this kind of pressure against political freedom.

Thus of the three forces that have made the pressures against political freedom generally predominate in socialist states so far, the first will be absent, the second reduced or absent, and the third possibly absent, in a future Western socialist state that emerged without external domination.

When these projections are borne in mind, Friedman's complaint about Western socialists appears somewhat impertinent. He com-

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plains that "none of the people who have been in favor of socialism and also in favor of freedom have really faced up to this issue [of means], or made even a respectable start at developing the institutional arrangements that would permit freedom under socialism" (p. 19). Perhaps the reason is that they think it more important, in the interests of freedom, to examine and try to influence the circumstances in which socialism might arrive, than to begin planning institutional arrangements. Western socialists who believe in political freedom are, or should be, more concerned with seeking ways to minimize the cold war (so as to minimize the chances that the second of the projected forces against political freedom will be present in the socialist transformation they hope to achieve in their country), and seeking ways to minimize the likelihood of civil war (so as to minimize the third of the forces against political freedom), than with developing "institutional arrangements that would permit freedom under socialism."

But although, in a socialist state, the existence of a predominant will for political freedom may be more important than institutional arrangements, the latter should not be neglected. For even where there is, on the whole, a will to guarantee political freedom, there are likely always to be some pressures against it, so that it is desirable to have institutions which will make infringements difficult rather than easy. What institutional arrangements, beyond the obvious ones of constitutional guarantees of civil liberties and a legal system able to enforce them, are required? Let us accept Milton Friedman's statement of additional minimum institutional requirements. Advocates of radical change opposed to the government's policies must be able to obtain the indispensable means of advocacy—paper, presses, halls, etc. And they must be able to propagandize without endangering their means of livelihood.

As we have already seen, there is no difficulty inherent in socialism in meeting the first of these requirements, once it is granted (as Professor Friedman's second model grants) that the absence of a complete capitalist market economy does not entail the absence of markets in paper, presses, and halls.

The second requirement seems more difficult to meet. If the government (including all its agencies) is the sole employer, the standing danger that the monopoly of employment would be used to inhibit or prevent certain uses of political freedom is obvious. The difficulty is not entirely met by pointing out that a socialist state can have any amount of devolution of industry or management, so that there can be any number of employers, or by stipulating as an institutional arrangement that this devolution be practiced. For it is evident that if there is a ubiquitous single or dominant political party operating in all industries and all plants (and all trade unions), it can make this multiplicity of employment opportunities wholly ineffective, if or insofar as it wishes to do so. The problem is not the absence of a labor market but the possible presence of another institution, a ubiquitous party which puts other things ahead of political freedom.

The stipulation that would be required to safeguard political freedom from the dangers of employment monopoly is not merely that there be devolution of management, and hence employment alternatives (which could be considered an institutional arrangement), but also that there be no ubiquitous party or that, if there is, such a party should consistently put a very high value on political freedom (which stipulation can scarcely be set out as an institutional arrangement). We are back at the question of will rather than way, and of the circumstantial forces which are going to shape that will, for the presence or absence of such a party is clearly going to depend largely on the circumstances in which a socialist state is established.

There is, however, one factor (which might be institutionalized) which may, in any socialist state established in the West, reduce even the possibility of such intimidation through employment monopoly. This is the decreasing necessity, in highly developed societies whose economic systems are undergoing still further and rapid technological development, of relat-

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ing income to employment. One need not be as sanguine as some exponents of the guaranteed income,[1] to think it possible, even probable, that before any advanced Western nation chooses socialism it will have seen the logic of using its affluence and averting difficulties both political and economic by introducing a guaranteed minimum annual income to everyone regardless of employment. In this event, the technical problem that worries Friedman—how to ensure that a threat to employment and hence to livelihood could not be used to deny political freedom—would no longer be a problem. A threat to employment would no longer be a threat to livelihood. It would indeed be a cost, but as Professor Friedman says, "what is essential is that the cost of advocating unpopular causes be tolerable and not prohibitive" (p. 18).

But even without such a separation of employment from income, the technical problem of securing political freedom from being denied by the withholding of employment can be met by such devolution of management as would constitute a set of alternative employments *provided* that this is not offset by a ubiquitous party hostile to political freedom. If there is such a party, no institutional arrangements for safeguarding political freedom are reliable; if there is not, the institutional arrangements do not seem to be difficult.

III

WE NOTICED (at the end of section I above) that Professor Friedman, in arguing that freedom would be increased if most of the regulatory and welfare activities of contemporary Western states were abandoned, did not take into account the coercion involved in the separation of capital from labor or the possible mitigation of this coercion by the regulatory and welfare state. But in Chapter 10, on the distribution of income, he does deal with a closely related problem. Here he sets out the ethical case for distribution according to product, as compared with "another [principle] that seems ethically appealing, namely, equality of treatment" (p. 162). Distribution according to product he describes, accurately enough, as the principle "To each according to what he and the instruments he owns produces" (pp. 161–62): to be strictly accurate this should read "resources" or "capital and land" instead of "instruments," but the sense is clear. This is offered as "the ethical principle that would directly justify the distribution of income in a free market society" (p. 161). We can agree that this is the only principle that can be offered to justify it. We may also observe that this principle is not only different from the principle "to each according to his work," but is also inconsistent with it (except on the fanciful assumption that ownership of resources is always directly proportional to work). Professor Friedman does not seem to see this. His case for the ethical principle of payment according to product is that it is unthinkingly accepted as a basic value judgment by almost everybody in our society; and his demonstration of this is that the severest internal critics of capitalism, i.e. the Marxists, have implicitly accepted it.

Of course they have not. There is a double confusion here, even if we accept Friedman's paraphrase of Marx. Marx did not argue quite, as Friedman puts it (p. 167), "that labor was exploited . . . because labor produced the whole of the product but got only part of it"—the argument was rather that labor is exploited because labor produces the whole of the value that is added in any process of production but gets only part of it—but Friedman's paraphrase is close enough for his purpose. Certainly the implication of Marx's position is that labor (though not necessarily each individual laborer) is entitled to the whole of the value it creates. But in the first place, this is, at most, the principle "to each according to his work," not "to each according to what he and the instruments he owns produces" or "to each according to his product." In the second place, Marx accepted "to each according to his work" only as a transitionally valid principle, to be replaced by the ultimately desirable

[1] Robert Theobald, ed., *The Guaranteed Income* (New York, 1967).

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principle "to each according to his need." Friedman, unaccountably, only refers to this latter principle as "Ruskinian" (p. 167).

Having so far misread Marx, Professor Friedman gives him a final fling.

> Of course, the Marxist argument is invalid on other grounds as well . . . [most] striking, there is an unstated change in the meaning of "labor" in passing from the premise to the conclusion. Marx recognized the role of capital in producing the product but regarded capital as embodied labor. Hence, written out in full, the premises of the Marxist syllogism would run: "Present and past labor produce the whole of the product." The logical conclusion is presumably "Past labor is exploited," and the inference for action is that past labor should get more of the product, though it is by no means clear how, unless it be in elegant tombstones [pp. 167–8].

This nonsense is unworthy of Friedman's talents. The Marxist premises are: present labor, and the accumulation of surplus value created by past labor and extracted from the past laborers, produce the whole value of the product. Present labor gets only a part of that part of the value which it creates, and gets no part of that part of the value which is transferred to the product from the accumulated surplus value created by past labor. The logical conclusion is presumably that present labor is exploited and past labor was exploited, and the inference for action is that a system which requires constant exploitation should be abandoned.

Ignorance of Marxism is no sin in an economist, though cleverness in scoring off a travesty of it may be thought a scholarly lapse. What is more disturbing is that Milton Friedman seems to be satisfied that this treatment of the ethical justification of different principles of distribution is sufficient. Given his own first postulate, perhaps it is. For in asserting at the beginning of the book that freedom of the individual, or perhaps of the family, is the liberal's "ultimate goal in judging social arrangements," he said in effect that the liberal is not required seriously to weigh the ethical claims of equality (or any other principle of distribution), let alone the claims of any principle of individual human development such as was given first place by liberals like Mill and Green, against the claims of freedom (which to Friedman of course means market freedom). The humanist liberal in the tradition of Mill and Green will quite properly reject Friedman's postulate. The logical liberal will reject this fallacious proof that the freedom of the capitalist market is individual economic freedom, his undemonstrated case that political freedom requires capitalism, and his fallacious defense of the ethical adequacy of capitalism. The logical humanist liberal will regret that the postulate and the fallacies make *Capitalism and Freedom* not a defense but an elegant tombstone of liberalism.

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Jeffrie G. Murphy

Punishment for Looters?

If society lets any considerable number of its members grow up mere children, incapable of being acted on by rational considerations of distant motives, society has only itself to blame for the consequences.—John Stuart Mill

FOR REASONS that should be obvious, a society tends to accept as excuses only those conditions which it is possible for its more advantaged members to satisfy. Any of us, no matter how wellborn, can suffer mental disorder. And so it is common, once mental disorder of a certain sort has been established, to excuse or at least mitigate the moral or legal responsibility for actions performed under the influence of the disorder. Similarly, any of us can act in ignorance, and some kinds of ignorance can excuse or mitigate responsibility for consequences.

Many of us, however, have not been placed by our society in the position of being economically and culturally deprived or of risking such deprivation. And so we tend to take a tone of righteous indignation when it is even suggested that *social* (as opposed to psychological) disadvantage be considered a legitimate excuse for wrongdoing. Many well-intentioned liberals, for example, react in horror when representative members of a black community demand amnesty for crimes, like looting, which they judge to be substantial products of social disadvantage. Against such heretical suggestions, we might even be tempted to argue that being responsible is part of the meaning of human dignity, and to deprive members of the black community of the opportunity of being held responsible for what they do is to regard them as having no dignity—to treat them as animals or children rather than mature persons. There is something ironic, after years of systematic treatment of blacks as children or animals, in wanting them to have that one dignity (responsibility) which it is painful for them to have; but there is perhaps some point in the argument.

Unless this plea for social excuses is carefully specified (as it often is not by those who make it), there will be good grounds for resisting it. It is important to see, for example, that we cannot cite social disadvantage as an argument that looting is morally or legally *right*. For looting is, since prohibited by statute, quite clearly legally wrong; and it would appear to be, because probably productive of more evil than beneficent consequences, morally wrong as well. But the issue that concerns me here is not the objective rightness or wrongness of looting. Rather it is, granting that looting is wrong, whether or not its practice is, under certain social circumstances, to be *excused*. And this is quite a different issue. To hurt my secretary's feelings by extreme rudeness is morally wrong, but surely I am to be at least partially excused for this if I am laboring under great mental strain. (Suppose, for example, I had recently learned that my child had an incurable illness.) We tend to excuse men in such circumstances because, though we know the act was wrong, we are not sure that we could have exercised any better restraint if comparably placed. And so it seems only fair to take a tolerant line.

Such an appeal to fairness provides, I think, a good reason for at least partially excusing (and therefore not punishing, or punishing with reduced severity) those who engage in looting during the recurrent disturbances in our black ghettos. For consider how the world must look to these people. As they perceive our society, it surely presents little but a source of deep

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and destructive frustration. Our mass media make the ownership of gaudy and frivolous possessions into not just a condition for human happiness, but a condition even for the worth of a person. The value that one has in our society is made to depend upon the material goods that one can conspicuously display. Attainment of these goods, however, is systematically impossible for our disadvantaged minorities. Society, at least as they (not too inaccurately) see it, is structured to thwart all the expectations which that society simultaneously holds out to them. Many of them are neither given, nor do they have an opportunity to earn, income sufficient for such basic necessities as food, clothing, and shelter—much less for the frivolities that are a part of the American way of life. Unlike those self-made men who are always happy to remind us that *they* were able to make it into affluent society ("I fight poverty; I work"), black people are for the most part not members of a temporary minority. Rather they are among the ranks of the *permanently disadvantaged,* the permanently left out. It is some indication of how highly their interests are valued that they are drafted in great numbers to fight in a war which has, as a major side effect, the scrapping of those programs that might make a start toward lifting them from their misery. It is not enough that they be oppressed; they must even assist in their own oppression.

WHAT HAPPENS when general disorder breaks out in a ghetto? As might be expected, some of these people take the opportunity (the first they have ever had) to cash in on the American Dream. Let us grant that what they are doing is legally and morally wrong. But the important question, surely, is the following: Should they be held fully responsible (and thus be fully punished) for what they do? (Such a sympathetic question is particularly appropriate when harsh cries of "respect law and order" and "end crime in the streets" are serving as the great national excuse for not doing anything about the real violence in our society.) And it seems to me that reasonable and fair men should consider this question and answer it with a *no.* For if sincere, none of us could confidently claim that we would exercise any better restraint if comparably placed; and it is unjust to demand of one man any greater restraint than it is reasonable to expect of *any* man in similar circumstances. If suddenly forced to change places with the ghetto black, we just might still exercise restraint. But if we did, this would no doubt be a residue of our respect for property and legal authority—a respect unreasonable to demand of the ghetto dweller since he can seldom have any of the former and quite plausibly regards the latter as an instrument of his oppression.

So it seems to me unreasonable because unfair to punish, or at least punish with full severity, those ghetto dwellers who loot in times of civil disorder. This is to demand of them a greater restraint than is reasonable to demand of any man in such circumstances. Note, for example, how sharply these people differ from those middle-class souls who, following a tornado or other disaster, begin to loot the scattered possessions of their neighbors. Note also how they differ from the police who, it is said, have on occasion joined in the looting.

These actions are not merely wrong but are *inexcusable* because it *is* reasonable to demand that these people, given *their* circumstances, exercise a greater restraint. This is particularly true of the police who have, in virtue of their office, a *duty* to refrain from such acts.

Now I have taken looting as an example because it seems to me that the case for tolerance is best made with respect to crimes against property. One must be careful about generalizing the argument to include crimes against persons (e.g. police); for these crimes are, Mayor Daley to the contrary, of a morally graver kind than crimes against property. Yet even here, though surely the violence is morally and legally wrong, there are at least some grounds for partially excusing its performance by the socially disadvantaged. For these people are not as inclined as their more advantaged fellow citizens to view legal authority as a bulwark *against* violence. Their perception of police and other legal authorities is rather different from that of the rest of us, for they see this authority (again not too inaccurately) as itself essentially violent.

As Newton Garver has observed ("What Violence Is," *Nation,* June 24, 1968, pp. 819–22), violence is often institutionalized into so-

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cially sanctioned forms. And this kind of violence, since it is accepted uncritically by most people, is the most dangerous of all. Most of the great atrocities of history have resulted from this kind of violence rather than from the violence of individuals. (And so no gun control bill, no matter how useful on other grounds, will even make a start toward rooting out the real violence and sickness of our society.) Once again, then, we must ask ourselves: If we perceived legal authorities (especially police) as themselves violently coercive against all our aspirations, would we really be able to exercise that kind of restraint we can manifest when viewing the police as protectors? I suspect not. For the disadvantaged are acting here either under extreme provocation or in a kind of excusable ignorance. The police may not in fact be as universally repressive and evil as ghetto dwellers believe. But then these people, given their experience, have little opportunity to come to know this.

Obviously some rioters, particularly those who engage in crimes against persons, will have to be institutionally restrained. This will be largely for protection of others rather than as deterrence, since penal sanctions tend to deter only those with something to lose. But we should view this restraint in part as a regrettable necessity and not as the righteous infliction of punishment. And in many circumstances, especially those involving crimes against property, society can well afford to seek mere recovery of property and abandon, through a tolerance motivated by fairness, most attempts at punishment. For as Mill reminds us, when we treat people as children or animals by controlling them violently and repressively, rather than treating them with sympathy and reason, we bear a part of the responsibility for what they do. Many of us in the white and satisfied majority have not heeded our own pious cries for an end to violence and a return to law and order. The only difference between us and the ghetto revolutionary is simply that the outlets for our violence are institutionally approved. This connotes a factual difference, but not a morally relevant difference.

IN CLOSING, I should mention that what I am suggesting is not paternalistic and is not, therefore, an inroad on the dignity of the people in question. I am not suggesting that, like animals or machines, they act by reflex or necessity without being able to help what they do. Rather I am suggesting that the pressures they face are more severe and the alternative channels for releasing those pressures more limited than is the case with most of the rest of us, and that tolerance demands that we take these pressures into account as mitigating circumstances. So I am suggesting that we consider social excuses, not out of charity or benevolence, but out of *justice*. For it is unjust (and not simply uncharitable) to demand of another man more than we could realize if comparably placed. If this is an attack on dignity, it is an attack on the dignity of us all. For if those of us who are white and wellborn were forced to change places with the urban blacks, I am inclined to think we would exercise *less* restraint. For we are accustomed to getting most of our whims satisfied, and such habits die hard. So rather than citing black rebellion as evidence of basic black immorality, we should remember how long it was in coming and how much more destructive of life it could have been. This might incline us to marvel at the restraint of these people and to draw a more sympathetic conclusion about their moral character.

Charles R. Moyer

Concerning the Cant of "White Racism"

I WOULD LIKE to enter an immodest protest against all the talk about "white racism" that we have been hearing since the *Report* of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders.

Since I have no statistics and can speak only out of my experience, it might be well to keep my background in mind, for it may be that this is a kind of regional report. I have lived most of my life in the large cities of the Midwest (Flint, Chicago, and Minneapolis-St. Paul) and have spent most of my adult life as a college teacher.

That experience may be narrow but it is nonetheless real, and unless I am to deny its

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reality I cannot but believe that there is only a small minority of "white racists" in this country. Such people do exist, it seems, but I have never talked to a person who said that he thought black people are genetically or biologically inferior to white people. It may well be that people do not easily yield up their inmost thoughts in conversation, and there certainly are Southern sheriffs, Northern cops, and suburban mothers (I use the word in both senses) who are racists; but I am convinced that they are a relatively small and powerless group. To continually speak as if "white racism" were the issue is to give them an importance far out of proportion to their numbers, intelligence, and influence. It also ignores the crucial issues.

The average American that I meet and talk to—and I don't mean college professors—is not a racist, has never called anyone *boy* or *nigger,* and tends in fact to be somewhat more polite to Negroes than to most white people. That politeness does not spring from benevolence: it springs from apprehension and fear. The people I meet are not racists, but many of them do think that black people may be somehow "different," and they are a little afraid of them. Insofar as the average white American thinks that the blacks are "different," he is not always necessarily behaving reprehensibly: he is only agreeing with those black militants who are putting African masks on the wall and trying on leopard-skin jackets. Neither Whitey nor the black militant is able to define this difference very clearly. The militant thinks it has something to do with a verbal rather than a written culture, or with an inclination toward intuitive rather than discursive thinking. Whitey thinks it has something to do with living for the present rather than making sacrifices for tomorrow. The average white man and the black militant are in this, as in other matters, brothers under the skin, and I can't see that they aren't trying to say largely the same thing.

This cultural difference certainly exists, but it seems to me to have a lot more to do with poverty than with "Negritude," and it can easily be misinterpreted and exaggerated. Not many black people seem to be interested in "Negritude," and it has little influence on the white man's face-to-face encounters with individual Negroes. It exists largely as a possibility or an idea, and as such it has enough reality to make the white man jumpy when he thinks about large numbers of Negroes. The average white man—and I'm going to continue to pretend that I know just as much about that mythical figure as anyone else—is quite willing to accept Negroes as individuals to be judged on their own merits as long as he meets them face-to-face, one at a time. But when he thinks about large numbers of Negroes, then the possibility of that cultural difference begins to haunt him, and his apprehension begins to mount.

But even here I am not sure that his attitude is genuinely racist. The white man isn't sure what all those black people are doing, and what he really wishes is that they would do one of two things: either shape up or ship out. The latter alternative seems rather hazy to him, so what he really prefers is the first. He never was a slave owner and he doesn't want to be one. The fact that he can no longer hire cheap black kitchen help doesn't bother him a bit. He doesn't even think about it. What he does think is that we've got a pretty good thing going here in these United States of America and that those Negroes seem to be on the point of spoiling the party. If they would only stand up, straighten up, paint that fence, grab those jobs, and keep those kids off the streets, they would be as welcome as, say, the Japanese, whose success has been so extraordinary. If the Negroes want to fix up the ghetto, O.K. (He doesn't know that this is impossible.) If they would prefer to leave the ghetto and scatter out into the community, that might be O.K. too. He would be only too happy to see them living here, there, and everywhere, and behaving like Roy Wilkins or Whitney Young, for that would, he thinks, cater to his desire to stay in control of the situation.

He is even willing to help bring this about. He realizes that the Negroes have had a rough time of it in this country, and he is willing to help. He's in favor of those Head Start projects, job training programs, and college scholarships. (He doesn't know that these are futile rescue operations in a continuing economic disaster.) They're just fine with him, and he's even willing to help foot the bill. But he

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would like to see some results, and—this is the important point—he doesn't feel guilty, not a bit. He knows he's not a racist, and all that racist talk, although it may arouse his resentment, will not move him an inch.

THE AVERAGE WHITE MAN must be moved if we are not all to end in a holocaust; he must come to see that something on the order of the Freedom Budget is a necessity. But if imputations of racism won't move him, what will? I don't know, of course, but I think that he might be moved by the knowledge that what is going on in this country is not a racial but a class conflict. The white man knows that the great majority of people in the ghetto are black, but he has never asked himself whether or not that ghetto would be right there, crammed with people sweltering in the heat, even if Negro slaves had never been brought to this country. And what is the answer to that question? Isn't it *yes*, it would be right there, filled mostly with displaced people from the rural areas?

What the average white man needs to know, and what all the racist talk is hiding from him, is that about one-fifth of the American people never came out of the Depression. The thirties have never ended for them; but they have not been locked into the Depression because of racist individuals or even racist institutions. They have been locked in there because technological improvements have made large numbers of people unnecessary to the functioning of the nation's economy. What has happened is that a racial facade covers an economic disaster. The racial prejudices of white men helped to select the people who were railroaded into the ghetto, but both Whitey and the black militant have mistaken one of the means of imprisonment for its real cause. The truth is that if we could wave a magic wand and completely banish racism from the country tomorrow, we would still have a disaster on our hands.

If we could get the analyses, interpretations, and recommendations away from race and back to economics and politics, then I think we might have a context in which the white man might be brought to see what must be done. For he knows no system that continues to push 20 per cent of the citizenry into poverty and despair can really have a future. But as long as we continue to say that the fundamental cause of those ghettos is racism, he is going to plead not guilty—and to do nothing. Some armchair liberals, it is true, will get a titillating shudder from discovering racial stereotypes in their thinking, but that is strictly a parlor amusement. The most publicized portions of the Kerner Report have done the cause of racial equality a disservice because they have taken our attention off the real issues. If we keep talking up white racism, we will undoubtedly help to heighten it. And we will also miss our chance for understanding and dealing with the real causes of the revolution of our time.

William Bross Lloyd, Jr.

Peace and Radio In Vietnam

THERE IS WIDESPREAD AGREEMENT that lasting peace in Vietnam will require some sort of international presence to supervise the truce and lead to impartial control of the hoped-for free elections.

Uncensored reports from South Vietnam stress the overwhelming war-weariness of the people. How do the peace-planners propose to harness this dominant sentiment among the ordinary people of South Vietnam to the maintenance of the coming cease-fire and the development of a solid truce? So far nothing is being discussed publicly beyond 19th-century-model peace-keeping, involving military contingents to "police" the cease-fire.

But what happens when the Vietnamese of a particular area do not understand the objectives of the supervisory force and armed clashes occur? Are we to imagine that either the rightist or the Communist propaganda machines will refrain from taking advantage of such incidents? As in U.S. domestic outbreaks, dispassionate, impartial information is the best counter to inflammatory rumor. The problem is how to organize such an information program so that it will be accepted as

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reasonably impartial, and how to carry the program to the people of South Vietnam.

One approach that should at least be attempted is to endow an impartial truce supervisory commission with an observer corps capable of reaching any village of the country in a very short time and communicating through independent facilities with supervisory headquarters, plus radio broadcasting facilities capable of reaching every part of the country. The commission should be made up of a balanced and largely Asian group of nations with strong nonaligned representation. It should not be under the United Nations, which can have no claim to neutrality while it remains the officially-designated adversary of the Communist side in Korea.

The minimum to be aimed at now in order to maintain and solidify the truce is: full transportation and communication facilities for an unarmed or lightly armed observer corps and assured access to radio broadcasting facilities to bring observers' reports and impartial news bulletins to the population.

The proposal amounts to a nationwide and instantaneous "truth squad" operation cutting at the base of inflammatory propaganda. It would not involve any hobbling of the Saigon or Hanoi governments' or the NLF's radio operations, but would provide listeners with a dispassionate and factual alternative. There is little doubt, in view of the war-weariness of the people, that such an impartial radio station would enjoy a wide and receptive audience. Yet the choice would be a voluntary one on the part of each listener.

Assuming that a solid truce would lead to the scheduling of elections, the reporting and broadcasting operations of the supervisory commission could also act as a strong deterrent to violence and retaliation at this stage. In an election campaign it is known that violence against a candidate usually increases public sympathy for him and therefore his vote. On the other hand, even a circumstantial involvement in violence by leaders of another party tends to cut down their vote.

The National Liberation Front program envisages a nonaligned South Vietnam, and Hanoi's program ostensibly also supports this position. Let us hope that Saigon and Washington will be led to accept it, along with neutralization of the entire Indochinese peninsula. Such neutralization will be in constant danger unless there is a strong coalescence of the middle groups *within* South Vietnam. Without mass communications in the hands of the supervisory commission, these middle groups will be subject to constant erosion, and peace-makers could end up trying to walk on a knife-edge.

The U.S. Armed Forces have installed their own radio and television network in South Vietnam. If, as in World War II, withdrawal of U.S. forces is accompanied by widespread abandonment of equipment, how better could this be used than as a public information facility for the truce supervision agency?

Has there ever been a successful use of mass radio broadcasting by a truce commission? The nearest approach—and one that was successful even though implemented only for a short time—was in the 1965 Dominican Republic crisis.

The ruling junta controlled the government radio station in Santo Domingo, the most powerful in the country. The Constitutionalists (sometimes called the rebels) had a powerful station, and the reactionary General Wessin y Wessin had another.

In August 1965, the Organization of American States (OAS) contracted for the use of a commercial station that had gone off the air because of the crisis. The transmitter was not powerful, but the OAS was able to form a network of stations around the island for a special one-hour program each day, and on certain special occasions this linkup was maintained for longer periods. Paul Harrison, the OAS staff member who was involved in this operation, writes:

> Whereas the stations of the factions emphasized violence and bitterness, used every possible news report on the Dominican situation, and invented their own special ones, the Voice of the OAS stuck strictly to official statements, attacked no one and explained the proposals of the OAS Ad Hoc Committee, of which Ambassador Bunker was chairman, in a calm manner.
>
> The result was that when the Committee made a major proposal, in August of 1965, for a solution of the crisis and formation of a provisional government to prepare the nation for elections, the OAS received a flood of messages from all over the country sup-

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porting these proposals. In the Santo Domingo area, our station's reporters went out to interview the "man in the street" and we were surprised at how freely and frankly Dominicans gave their names, addresses, occupations, and their views on the proposals—overwhelmingly favoring the OAS formula. . . .

Shortly after the Provisional Government took office, General Wessin y Wessin's radio became rather obstreperous. Provisional President Hector Garcia Godoy issued a decree temporarily silencing all stations except Radio Santo Domingo, the official government station, and the Voice of the OAS.

In retrospect, it almost seems that we were lucky to have had a weak station while the factions had powerful ones. Gradually, it seemed, their sheer partisanship began to lose them a significant part of their audience.

Maintaining the peace in South Vietnam will be a matter of holding off conflict between various factions whose territorial areas of strength may overlap to a large degree. Therefore the problem will be closer to that which was met in the Dominican Republic than to that of Korea, where the geographical line of division was clear.

Although Saigon and Hanoi officialdom will undoubtedly look askance at the neutral broadcasting proposal as an invasion of "national sovereignty," it is hard to imagine the ordinary people of the area feeling deprived of anything by the project. It would give them an additional station on their dials, but nothing would compel them to listen if they chose not to. The situation would actually mark a gain in *popular* sovereignty because it would widen the people's range of current information.

Neale Hunter

Three Cadres From Shanghai

WHATEVER the initiators of the Cultural Revolution had in mind when they launched it, they must have expected to carry it further than it has gone, for the present situation shows all the signs of an unfinished job.

On the one hand, the prestige of the Party has been shattered in the main cities. This means that the young generation, particularly the students, who previously had almost boundless faith in all Party members, considering them representatives of Mao and the Central Committee, now have no vision of perfection besides the great man himself and his "close comrades-in-arms." And, having seen how suddenly the Chairman's closest friends can fall from grace, the students must also harbor secret uncertainties even about men like Lin Piao. Now, therefore, an enormous chasm has opened up between the old man at the top and his children—a space so vast that it can only be bridged by religious adulation.

But there are other consequences, equally important for the future. Never again, for example, will the decision of a majority in committee be taken as gospel. Only decisions which accord with the thought of Mao will be considered correct. In the short run, this could be beneficial. The people will be forced to think things out in the light of Mao's instructions, and they could have far worse guides than Mao in the present circumstances. In the long run, however (and the signs are already there), a new class of leading cadres will put on the mantle of Mao, and command obedience in his name. It is plain that the new rulers of Shanghai, for example, are already getting the unswerving loyalty formerly

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"I am fond of my freedom and value life . . . Feeling as I do about those who kept silent in a former period, I consider myself responsible . . . I thought a great deal before I went to Red Square . . ●

—LARISA DANIEL, *upon being sentenced to four years in exile for her protest against the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia.*

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accorded to the "black-line" Municipal Committee.

Then there is the army of ordinary administrators, badly shaken by the Cultural Revolution, but basically unchanged. The movement was meant to "touch their souls," to lever them from their office chairs and tilt them out among the masses. Somehow, in February and March 1967 the main advance balked and swerved aside leaving the average cadres mopping their brows.

The pity of this is that the one thing they have learned from the movement is not to take risks. Caution is about the last thing China needs in her petty officials. In the guise of rigid Maoists, they will expand to fill the gap between the young and the old again. Unless the movement re-gathers momentum, and sweeps through to put new life into the tired Party, it must be considered at least a partial failure. Let me illustrate this by describing what happened to three individuals I worked with in China. I have not used their real names.

CHOU CHEN-TI works in the English Department of the Shanghai Foreign Language Institute. His first love has always been teaching, but because of his experience as a Party member he has risen to be a kind of Sub-Dean. He is one of tens of thousands of minor Chinese officials known as "ordinary cadres." It was he who introduced me to China. He showed me around Peking when I arrived, keeping up a constant patter of doctrine to make sure I understood the true significance of the Imperial Palace, the Great Wall, and the Ming Tombs. In fact, in Peking he was as much of a tourist as I.

In Shanghai he took me straight to my hotel room on the twelfth floor of the Shanghai Mansions. The view of the city by night for the first time was breath-taking. The streetlights ebbing away west from the great S-bend of the river. Barges on the Soochow Creek maneuvering into line for the long haul inland. The Bund, brilliantly lit by phosphorus lamps. I remember him sidling up next to me, clicking his ill-fitting false teeth. "There it is," he said. "Shanghai. It used to be known as a Paradise of Adventurers. We Chinese people, under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Party, are transforming it into a Paradise for the Workers."

Vision of Paradise

IT WAS this vision of a land of milk and honey —a paradise of the future but also in a way present—that dominated everything he said. Every sentence he ground out in his slow, picturesque English was to affirm that everything was great in a great world. Nothing, by definition, could possibly go wrong for long.

Significantly, after the Cultural Revolution began, I never again heard him speak in this vein.

As time went by I had to admit that Chou Chen-ti, though thoroughly likable, was a classical "yes-man." He had survived a variety of regimes, any one of which could have crushed him. He had done this by learning to say what the press said. Deep down, he was only interested in two things: keeping his job as a teacher, and preserving his family intact. To achieve these ends he was prepared to go to almost any lengths. Nor could you say he was selfish; for in the process of protecting his job and his family he had come close to losing his soul. There was hardly any Chou Chen-ti left; just this smiling mouth churning out dogma.

Despite all this experience, the Cultural Revolution very nearly finished him. For the first time in his life, he found the golden phrases bereft of their magic. Incredibly, he found himself forced to make a decision, to choose between two sides. And his whole future depended on the choice. He must have been appalled to find that each side used the same terms, each claimed the sole right to defend Chairman Mao and the Party, each carried out bold revolutionary coups. Like thousands of his kind, he chose wrongly. As the rebels never tired of pointing out, by choosing to stick by the Party Committee in the Institute, he became a tool for the Secretary, who used him to divert the forces that were threatening to unseat him. Confident that the Party Committee (which for him represented Chairman Mao and the Central Committee) would triumph, Chou worked conscientiously to protect it, writing scathing *dazibaos* against the rebel students.

As the months went by, it became sickeningly clear that he had blundered. In November the rebels broke into the Party offices and ransacked the files, searching for proof that the Party Committee had kept forbidden "black lists," classifying students and teachers as leftists, mid-

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dle-of-the-roaders or rightists. Even at this late stage, Chou joined in the outraged protest against this "fascist action" by a "handful of counter-revolutionaries."

Panic-Stricken

THEN CAME the big swing, when the rebels made it clear that they had found the documents they were looking for, and when Chairman Mao more than hinted that he favored the rebels. Around December 20, half the Institute changed sides, dropping the Party Secretary like a hot cake. Chou stampeded with the rest, panic-stricken at the enormity of his error.

All through January he was under a cloud. In vain he bellowed sayings from the little red book, raised his fist to slogans with the best of them. The students had seen through him and despised him. They were not going to let him off the hook easily. But in February came the news of a compromise policy toward the cadres, and a ray of light appeared. If Chou was prepared to stand up and publicly denounce the Party Secretary and his lackeys, he would be welcomed back to the side of the revolutionary masses.

I attended some meetings of this kind, and I can testify that Chou and others like him put on a good performance. It was plainly a performance, and I cannot imagine that anyone took it seriously. Nevertheless, little by little, he scraped together some prestige, until one night he even came to visit me in my hotel—always a sure sign that someone was all right. He came with some rebel students, and I was staggered to see him telling them what to do as in the "bad old days." For these were the very students who had terrorized the Institute for months, the fearsome Red Rebel Field Army, scourge of all bourgeois reactionaries in authority.

By March, the only step left for him was to make a formal self-criticism. Twice he was billed to appear, and I was invited. But each time it was cancelled so that the students could criticize Liu Shao-chi and his book "How to be a Good Communist." When I left Shanghai in April, Chou was almost rehabilitated. He had lost a lot of respect but he still had his job and his family was intact. He was a chastened man, but on the up-and-up again.

The irony of the Cultural Revolution, as far as Chou Chen-ti was concerned, is that it was about the only thing that could have made a man of him, the only way he might have been shaken into some sort of intellectual honesty. The fact that it did little more than frighten him, that it failed to "touch his soul," is a measure of the failure of the movement itself. For he was a "bourgeois reactionary authority"—even though a little one. And he has not really changed. Except that now he is wiser by half, and will not fall for the same tricks again.

"Cheke-Cheke" Chou

ANOTHER CHOU was far higher up the Party hierarchy in the Institute. He was the second person I met in China, and since both were surnamed Chou, I baptized the second one "Cheke-cheke Chou," from his habit of inserting "cheke-cheke" (Chinese for "um" or "er") between every phrase. This name stuck, and even the students adopted it, laughing when they heard him say things like "Mao Tse-tung's . . . cheke-cheke . . . thought."

I met this Chou at a seaside resort in the north, where we had a holiday together before going down to Shanghai for the academic year. At the time, I was pleasantly surprised to find that cadres such as he (he was vice-president of the Institute) could take a month off in the summer to play tennis and loll in the sea with the foreign teachers. From our conversations I learned that he had been at Yenan with Mao. There was still a good deal of the military man about him: battered, ex-pug face under crew-cut grey hair, and a habit, unlike his namesake, of saying little and saying it with punch.

I liked him from the beginning, especially when he called me to his room to explain the new education system. He was frank about the uncertainty of it all, about the experimental nature of much that the Party had done, and asked me to suggest improvements and innovations. He gave me the impression of a hard, honest man, the best type of administrator.

When the Cultural Revolution began, he was among the first to be hit. As early as June there were *dazibaos* accusing him of being a degenerate bureaucrat, isolated from the masses, a malingerer who pleaded poor health to get out of the weekly bout of manual labor. That, I thought, would be the end of him. His revolutionary usefulness at an end, he would be turned out to graze somewhere and be forgotten. His place would be taken by younger and more

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dynamic men, full of the rebel spirit that the movement had engendered. I felt sorry for him, but had a sneaking suspicion that he himself would not mind so much. After all, he must have been nearly 70. Time to step down.

I could not have been more mistaken. Far from retiring gracefully, "Cheke-cheke" Chou simply swayed to one side and waited. He was lucky to have fallen from favor in the early part of the movement, for in this way he avoided being identified with the Party Secretary. When the latter fell, therefore, Chou's star soared to a new height.

All kinds of things came out then. It appeared that Chou had been Party Secretary once, and had been kicked upstairs by this bourgeois reactionary interloper. Now the students started uncovering good things about him. As far back as 1957 he had suggested a teaching reform to the Shanghai Minister of Education. That was the time of the Great Leap, and Chou's theory was right along the Mao line. It could be summed up as "Two is more than four": that is, a student who studies hard for two years turns out better than one who plods along for four. The Minister of Education was not impressed—luckily for Chou, because that Minister had been furiously attacked during the movement.

So, from a degenerate, "Cheke-cheke" Chou became a martyr. He had been victimized by the Party Secretary, falsely accused of vile crimes, used as a scapegoat, etc. Result: in March, when the cadres were given a chance to join the rebel ranks, he was completely rehabilitated. And in early April, when a Revolutionary Committee was named to celebrate the newly-won unity of students, teachers, and cadres, who should appear (as Chairman, no less, of the Committee) but "Cheke-cheke" Chou himself!

I attended the inaugural meeting, which strained my sense of reality to the limit. Here was this man, who had made a speech at the very first meeting I attended at the Institute, two years before, sitting up there on the dais again, in much the same position! Only this time, instead of professors by his side, there sat the heroic fireball rebels themselves, who had put in months of shouting, screaming, struggle, risking the direst punishments, to bring the administration down! My interpreter smiled when I suggested it was ironic. "Ah," she said, "but think of what has happened in-between."

When I left China the Institute organized a party. Everyone sat around drinking tea, while "Cheke-cheke" Chou, now firmly in control, got up and made a speech about how I had come "10,000 li" (miles) to help them build socialism. He even cracked a joke, which had not been easy during the movement: "We are Revolutionary Rebels," he said, "and we are saying goodbye to a Revolutionary Rebel." I raised my eyebrows. I had hardly been a model Maoist. But he went on: "You flew in the face of the U.S. imperialists and their running dogs by coming to China. That is true Revolutionary Rebellion."

Everybody laughed, not because it was funny, but because it was unorthodox.

I made my speech of thanks, and all the time I was looking at "Cheke-cheke" Chou, and he was looking at me, and the exchange was almost a kind of smiling understanding. Each of us might have been thinking "Well, you old rogue!"

A Bourgeois Revolutionary

A MONTH AFTER I had arrived in China a student, Chang Fu-lan, showed me just how revolutionary one could be. This young man spoke on behalf of the students at the opening-day ceremony at the Institute. The speeches by various officials and professors had been strong enough, I thought, compared with the stuff I was used to at home. They all pledged to continue the fight against imperialism and revisionism by becoming even more red and even more expert, by mastering Chairman Mao's thought and applying it creatively in their work, etc.

Then Chang spoke. He had a husky voice, and used it like artillery. He spoke so fast I could not catch a word, and my interpreter was left far behind. What he said is probably not so important; it was his spectacularly dynamic approach that galvanized me, and kept the hall applauding for a long time. I had never seen anyone so worked up on an official occasion and said so. The interpreter nodded proudly and began to praise him. I imagined the poor teacher who had to face him, and asked what language he was studying. "English," was the reply." He'll be one of your students!"

As I got to know him, I found under his excited voice and manner one of the gentlest people I had ever met. He was exceptionally dili-

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gent, especially in political studies. I learned that he was on probation to become a Party member, and that great things were expected of him.

When the Cultural Revolution began, Chang stood firmly by the side of the Party Secretary and the Party Committee. No other student worked so hard to protect the leaders from the slanderous accusations of the rebels. He evidently saw himself as a heroic figure, putting his strong young body between the forces of evil and the representatives of his beloved Chairman Mao. Unfortunately, he came from a bourgeois background. His grandfather had owned a business, and the family still lived in a tree-lined street in the best part of the old French Concession. His grandmother, he once confessed to me, smiling sadly as he said it, still went to church, still gave her money to "those superstitious swindlers, the priests."

When the Red Guards started ransacking the houses of "bourgeois" elements, Chang knew his family would be on the list. He also knew he would be expected to take part in the raids. The Party Secretary, to his eternal shame, privately advised him to go to Peking on an "experience-exchanging" trip, thus sparing him the pain of denouncing his own parents.

Chang was never a Red Guard himself, because of his class origin, but he played a big part in organizing the "moderate" faction at the Institute. The policy of this group, which was for a long time in the majority, was to oppose violence in any shape or form, and to see that the criticized Party men got a fair deal, and were not just railroaded out of office by the Rebels. The Rebels, on the other hand, were prepared to go any length to get rid of the monsters who had betrayed Chairman Mao and subjected them—the revolutionary masses—to a reign of white terror.

In December and January, when power in the Institute swung to the extremists, Chang and a dwindling group stuck it out in opposition. Oddly enough, my whole class stayed with him, though their original organization was disbanded and its leaders bitterly attacked. The remainder no longer defended the Party Secretary, who was by this time well past help; but they refused to join the Rebels, roundly declaring that they were an arrogant lot and had made many mistakes in the movement, for which they should criticize themselves.

Finally (but it was not until the beginning of April) the last opposition caved in. I was there on the day Chang himself changed sides. It was a few days before I left China, so his speech that day brought me round the full circle. A more subdued Chang Fu-lan I could not have imagined. He painfully explained his errors, describing how the evil Secretary had used him as a shield, had exploited his love for Chairman Mao to make him oppose Chairman Mao. Then he broke down and wept. But he went on talking, his voice taking on something of the old passion, as he gestured furiously toward the culprit, the sentences ending in sobs, his face shining with tears.

There is an unbelievable amount of pure theater on most such occasions. I have seen a girl of ten abuse her father's detractors with the rage of an Antigone. But not a word of it was genuine. I know, because she recited a speech that one of my students had written for her, a student who rather fancied himself as a stylist. In the case of Chang Fu-lan, however, I think it was real enough. I believe he was hurt very deeply by the movement. Most youths of 20 are highly susceptible to the scorn of their friends, and to be hated outright by almost the whole student body must have been unbearable.

Anyway, he cried, and he got it off his chest. Or a fraction of it. What about the rest? What about the faith he lived by: his faith in the Party and in the members of the Party? Will he ever be able to regain that complete trust?

THESE THREE PEOPLE all went through a period of confusion, followed by one of acute personal suffering, followed by a kind of enlightenment —an enlightenment which carries with it a certain degree of cynicism, of which the young at least were blissfully free a year ago. Cynicism is the one thing an ideology like Communism cannot tolerate, and the last thing China wants in her present stage. It is also well-nigh impossible to eradicate.

Mao knows this. To have risked contaminating his country's greatest asset—the optimism of the Chinese people—he must have had tangible victories in mind. Until there is clear proof that such victories have been won, the Cultural Revolution must be considered a defeat.

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N. Gordon Levin, Jr.

Sources of U. S. Imperialism

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM: A SPECULATIVE ESSAY, by Ernest R. May. New York: Atheneum. 239 pp. $5.95.

THIS BOOK is concerned with explaining America's sudden turn to overt imperial expansion in 1898–99 through the annexation of Puerto Rico and the Philippines. One might immediately ask why this is a historical problem since there can be no doubt that one of the dominant themes of earlier American history had been that of territorial expansion across the North American continent. By and large, however, Americans tended to perceive this early expansion as the conquest of land and not of people. The early vision of America's manifest destiny involved free white people moving out into a fertile empty space which God had ordained as the home of a unique, liberal, individualistic society.

The problem was, however, that people did already exist on this supposedly virgin land—the American Indians. Little if any sustained effort was made by Americans to absorb the Indians or their land into the United States. Of course, the fact that the American Indians had a tribal culture of their own has inhibited their assimilation to a liberal individualistic society all of whose other members, black or white, either were themselves immigrants or descendants of immigrants who, voluntarily or not, had been uprooted from their native milieu. Thus, as the 20th century approached, the United States had a history of expansion, but little or no experience in establishing imperial rule over settled alien populations. Moreover, as Indians were removed or ignored, Americans found it possible during most of the 19th century to square expansion with an ideology of anticolonialist liberalism.

The central problem for May is to explain why after the Spanish-American War the United States moved to violate its anti-imperial tradition by establishing formal imperial rule over Puerto Rico and the Philippines. May does not reject earlier answers to this question. He discusses the growth of imperialistic social Darwinist ideology in America, the existence of a drive for foreign markets fed by a fear of domestic underconsumption, and finally, the social and psychic crisis in the United States during the 1890's which saw hitherto conflicting class and ideological elements joining momentarily for a popular nationalistic release in war against Spain. To these factors May contributes another of his own by arguing that the American foreign-policy establishment in the late 19th century (an establishment of businessmen, politicians, educators, ministers, and publicists whose interlocking and regional nature May describes skilfully) was moved to abandon its traditional hostility to foreign conquest because of the growth of imperial theory and practice in an Atlantic world, especially that of England, to which American foreign-policy elites felt themselves bound by cosmopolitan ties of intellect. In short, by employing his own version of reference group theory, May argues for the importance of emulation in explaining "the impact on Americans of English and European examples."

MAY'S ANALYSIS is an extremely helpful one because of its global focus. Especially useful is his discussion of the manner in which traditional liberal anti-imperialist theory and practice became eroded in France and England, and was stillborn in Germany. Classical liberalism in England had been paradoxically and uncomfortably joined with a mid-nineteenth-

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century English formal and informal empire which ensured Britain commercial and strategic global dominance under the umbrella of a naval Pax Britannica. It is not surprising, then, that the decline of Britain's relative power position in the late 19th century was also accompanied by a sharp drop in the global influence of free-trade classical liberalism, an ideology which to some in Germany and elsewhere appeared as a cover for continued British hegemony.

In place of the notion of an open international capitalist system of liberal harmony, there developed on the continent theories of state capitalist imperialism calling for cooperation between government and business in the search for national advantage in a competitive world. It is this neo-mercantilist marriage of state and capitalism (often accompanied by national-socialist welfare programs designed to curb socialism, appease the working class, and strengthen the efficiency of the state and its economy for global competition) which most characterized the era of imperialism with its scramble for empire in Africa and Asia. In an England newly threatened by rising powers, liberalism quickly became liberal-imperialism for many, with Gladstone's behavior on the Egyptian question and Joseph Chamberlain's conversion from classical liberalism to imperialism constituting the major events. There also arose theories of imperial responsibility for the protection and the tutelage of underdeveloped peoples, theories which paradoxically united the competing imperial powers around the common assumption of the manifest destiny of white Europeans to dominate the underdeveloped world.

As mentioned above, there existed strong American liberal traditions in opposition to the entire approach of European imperialism. American society had never been receptive (outside of the South) to military-aristocratic institutions or to concepts of hierarchy and dominance. That is to say, the *state* component of the European marriage between state and capitalism, a component based in large part as Schumpeter maintained on an atavistic aristocratic warrior tradition, was hard to establish in a society such as America in which liberal-capitalist individualism had been the dominant institutional and ideological motif.

Yet, as May argues, there is good evidence that the American foreign-policy establishment was nonetheless impressed with English liberal-imperialist doctrine as transmitted by Seeley, Dilke, Froude, Rosebery, and Chamberlain. Moreover, as other historians have shown, in this period such American leaders as Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge, and others of the Anglophile Republican elite increasingly came to accept English notions of a joint Anglo-American world order, and were not averse, in return for British recognition of America's strategic preeminence in the Western Hemisphere, to operating in world politics in concert with British imperial power in search of an Anglo-Saxon political order and commercial stability in Africa and Asia. Finally, it should be noted that Theodore Roosevelt was also an advocate of fusing national assertion with progressive domestic social reform from above.

It could be argued, however, that May's whole emphasis on the events of 1898–99 is misplaced. In the view of such historians as William A. Williams, Walter La Feber, and Thomas McCormick, what is significant is not so much the fact of America's opting for an overtly imperial role in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, but rather the manner in which there can be illustrated a basic continuity in America's foreign policy goals both before and after the events of 1898–99. According to the Williams school, American foreign policy since the 1870's has been marked by an urge toward commercial expansion in the face of the threat of domestic underconsumption of industrial goods. Consequently, the United States has sought to open all areas of the world to American exports, but has never been really interested in a formal empire on the European model. Rather, the United States has attempted to secure the open door for American goods in other nations' empires. These historians do not share May's view of the significance of the annexation of Puerto Rico and the Philippines, actions which they see as pragmatic steps toward the larger goal of commercial expansion, and they would also emphasize that after 1900 the United States made no more annexations because the expansion of American political and economic influence in search of a global open door for American industry could take place more successfully through the more ef-

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ficient techniques of informal empire in the Caribbean and elsewhere.

PERSUASIVE as this analysis may seem, we ought not to move too quickly past the events and debates of 1898–99, and we are indebted to May for helping us to take another and closer look at the moment of America's decision to opt, even if only momentarily, for the overtly imperialistic path. Within the American foreign-policy establishment this decision was not a universally popular one by any means. Momentarily unified around the vision of a war against reactionary Spain to free the Cubans, the elite soon split over the issue of annexing Puerto Rico and the Philippines. The anti-imperialists spoke of America's liberal traditions of antimilitarism, anticolonialism, and expansion into unsettled (ignoring the Indians) areas of contiguous virgin land. Fusing idealism with racism, they insisted that the Puerto Ricans and Filipinos were incapable of adopting liberal values and that the necessity of continuing to dominate them would only contaminate the purity of the American liberal way by turning the United States toward European values of hierarchy and despotism.

The anti-imperialists accepted the necessity for American commercial expansion, but they argued that the United States could best achieve the conquest of world markets by advocating freer trade, peaceful international-capitalist order, and a global system beyond European-style power politics. In opposition, the imperialist position in 1898–99 insisted that America had to operate in an imperialist global environment in which power counted in the search for markets. The United States could not create a peaceful and open international-capitalist world order by merely wishing it, and in the meantime, the Philippines, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico were of immense strategic and economic value.

In addition, the imperialists rejected the anti-imperialist view that Filipinos and Puerto Ricans were incapable of being liberalized. Instead, they maintained that American colonial rule would uplift native peoples to the practice of true freedom, and that it was America's moral and religious duty to make the effort. In this sense, then, the imperialists, for all their sense of racial and cultural superiority were, paradoxically, less racist than those of their anti-imperialist opponents who, in the American tradition of dealing with the Indians, assumed that underdeveloped alien cultures were incapable of being Americanized. Of course, the long and bloody American repression of Aguinaldo's Philippine nationalist revolt, which followed immediately upon annexation, reveals the danger in any imperial effort to force another people to be free, but it is extremely significant, nonetheless, that in 1898–99 the United States did decide to make its first missionary effort to liberalize a foreign society.

While it is true that the United States moved back to formal anti-imperialist orthodoxy after 1900, it is important to note the manner in which, during later periods of American diplomatic history, the United States came to practice an expansive diplomacy which fused viewpoints from both sides in the imperial debate of 1898–99. From the anti-imperialists came a sense of American liberal-exceptionalism, and a vision of a missionary America defeating traditional European imperialism and constructing a peaceful, new world order of liberal capitalist harmony, safe for the export of American goods and values. From the imperialists came a willingness to fuse business and the state for power goals, a realistic assessment of the structure of world trade and politics, and a willingness to use American power, even if not in an overtly imperialistic manner, in the reformation and reconstruction of alien peoples and polities.

Moreover, the existence of an American liberal norm for world politics has meant, despite periodic swings between involvement and semi-isolation, that American foreign policy has been characterized by a "centrist" ideological

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content in a 20th century marked by major political world movements of the Right and the Left. It is this strange fusion of national self-interest with liberal internationalism which has marked, and continues to mark, the American search for an orderly "centrist" global Pax Americana. In the creation of this (as the Williams school might term it) expansive American "imperialism of anti-imperialism," the events and debates of 1898–99 were of real importance, and Ernest May's book helps us to understand them better.

Steven Jervis

Guidebook to Disaster

Nigeria, by Walter Schwarz. New York: Frederick A. Praeger. 328 pp. $7.50.

GIVEN THE IMMEDIACY of war and starvation, it is tempting to regard the Nigerian conflict as a mere calamity, without considering causes. But this bloody African conflict must be the subject of historical contemplation as well as humanitarian response: we need to know why it happened.

This book will assist those who search beyond the horror. A veteran British reporter of Nigerian affairs, Mr. Schwarz writes with fluency and understanding. The first half of his account is the less interesting: Nigeria from prehistory to independence (1960). It is well done, but the ground has been covered before. The rest of the book, which reaches to the beginning of the war in 1967, compels immediate attention.

While fashioning a tranquil image for its Western friends, Nigeria had a tumultuous time after Independence: Chief Awolowo's treason trial; the census disputes; two violent elections and two coups in which a pair of regional premiers, a prime minister, and a commander-in-chief were coldly murdered. Each of these events shook the entire country and imperiled its survival—the present conflict had adequate preparation. The closer he gets to the outbreak of war, the more detailed Mr. Schwarz becomes. His chapter "Three Coups" neatly sets down the last steps to disaster, from the "revolt of the majors" in January 1966 to the invasion of the newly-seceded East 18 months later.

No account of Nigerian politics can make sense without discussing ethnic composition and pressures. Mr. Schwarz frames his narrative with chapters about tribes and tribalism. He manages a fair balance between the precision of political analysis and the impressionism of ethnic judgment. "There are two nationalisms in Nigeria," he argues, and the deeper "is not concerned with Nigeria but with Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa." And not only with them, but with a mass of smaller tribes. Tribal nationalism, Mr. Schwarz ironically adds, "is by no means confined to the illiterate." Education has intensified rather than diminished tribal feeling, with intellectuals and civil servants the most disappointing exemplars. One of the lesser crises of recent years followed the politically-motivated replacement of the Igbo Vice-Chancellor of the University of Lagos with a Yoruba, who was (literally) knifed on his inauguration. Only a few brave spokesmen, exceptions to a rule of expediency, ignorance, and sloth, have acted from truly extra-tribal motives.

The most ambitious of Nigeria's big tribes, the Eastern Igbos formed an alliance with the North and shared federal power until mid-1964. They then joined with a divided West, but lost out badly in the national elections. Forced back into the old partnership on the North's terms, they found themselves farther than ever from government control. All this was reversed in January 1966, when a reformist coup forced the civilian regime to cede power to the army. This was not what the reformers had intended—they wanted to obliterate the old order, highest army officers included. Unfortunately the military commander and new head of state, General Ironsi, like the coup leaders was Igbo.

Mr. Schwarz makes the important observation that Ironsi's ascendancy was at first welcomed even in the North, despite the killing of the region's two major politicians and several popular military officers. Although Igbos were the only large group spared in the coup, a fresh wind seemed to have blown tribalism right out of the country. (My too optimistic

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letter in the July–August 1966 DISSENT reflects the mood of those days.)

But the wind proved hardly a puff. As an Igbo propelled into power, however accidentally, by other Igbos, Ironsi had to free himself from the taint of tribal chauvinism. He failed badly, in a series of blunders which made him seem more an Igbo than the national figure he wanted to become. The bulk of his army promotions went to Igbos, as did a sole commissionership for the study of civil service unification, a topic the North dreaded. When he precipitately abolished the old regional structure, he gave reactionary forces their opening: preying upon Northern fears of domination by the entrepreneurial Igbos, they stimulated the tribal rioting which led to Ironsi's downfall in a second coup and drove the Igbos out of the North.

A YEAR of strenuous maneuvers brought not reconciliation but fracture. Mr. Schwarz is sympathetic to Biafra's controversial leader, Colonel Ojukwu, whom he regards as vastly more sophisticated than Ironsi. Yet Ojukwu emerges as a victim of Igbo resentments, particularly of refugee tribesmen returning to the East. Menaced and rejected in regions where they had lived for years, these men saw no future in "One Nigeria" and wanted out of it. *It was they more than the settled Easterners who forced secession.* The author does not indicate when the Eastern leadership resolved to leave the federation—Biafra's enemies believe it was as early as September 1966, eight months before the final break. It is a question one would like answered, since the decision has brought such misery. With no promise of diplomatic recogntion, much less aid, and with shaky assent at best from the millions of Easterners who were not Igbos, Ojukwu took an immense risk in proclaiming the Republic of Biafra. It now seems one of the costliest miscalculations in African history, one which no sense of oppression could justify.

About the miserable war, much has at last been said. After months of indifference the American press has made good copy of starvation, and even the fighting itself has had some attention. Life is near normal in the West and North, but the war zones have been devastated. In a war with few soldiers, civilians have suffered most. In Igboland especially thousands have been killed, hundreds of thousands doomed to starvation or permanent disability.

Nevertheless the Biafran charge of genocide seems inaccurate. That terrible word means the deliberate destruction of a race, and, however convinced Igbos may be that only that fate awaits them, there is little to support the accusation. It has been denied by international observers, including U Thant's representative; thousands of Igbos have been living quietly in Lagos throughout the war and an Igbo administrator has been installed at Enugu, the captured Biafran capital. With non-Igbo territory in Biafra under federal control, there are hints of disunity among the Igbos themselves, particularly among the commercial Onitshans who stood to lose most by secession. Ojukwu has promised guerrilla action, a serious threat but by no means a certainty. Meanwhile neither side seems deeply concerned by the plight of civilians: in this war, women and children come last.

Should Biafra collapse, two big problems will emerge: the role of the Igbos and the workability of the 12-state structure proclaimed by Lagos in May 1967. Although Nigerians have been able to patch bitter feuds with surprising amiability, there can be no telling the aftermath to the current horror. Igbos may slowly accept and be accepted by Nigeria, but even the flimsy stability of prewar days will be hard to regain. Mr. Schwarz regards the new states arrangement as crucial, a "third coup" which brought to power not Igbo, Yoruba, or Hausa, but the country's many minority tribes, of whom General Gowon, an Angas, is the chief representative. Perhaps. But the old tribally-based political parties retain much strength. There is still the dreary possibility that Nigeria's future will resemble its past.

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LETTERS

On Mass Culture

Editor:

More power to "high culture," by all means, but is Bernard Rosenberg's *cri de coeur* really likely to contribute to the worthy cause he espouses?

Allow me to touch on a few points in his article (DISSENT, July–August 1968) that seem to me to hold, at best, very little water:

Item: On the one hand, Arthur Miller, being presumably "mid-cult," just won't do, yet it is to be deplored that only one per cent of the population sees plays "on the stages of America." But what are those 99 per cent missing, anyway? Surely there must be a blessing in not being exposed at least to Arthur Miller, not to speak of Neil Simon.

Item: The changes of public attitude in recent history toward Russia, China, and Japan are adduced as proof of the media's brainwashing potential. But are not those changes at least partially a reflection of actual events in the world? Or does Rosenberg imply that in the pre-TV past the constantly changing pattern of international enmities and alliances was sternly resisted by the world's peoples?

Item: If anthropologists have found that "no human society . . . is devoid of art," that does not mean that all human societies have had high culture. It is *for us* that "exotic artifacts" have become art, or high culture; for the people who produced them they were, as anthropologists well know, much more immediately functional (as religious objects, for example) than high art ever has been.

Item: If "sub-art" has a tendency, as Rosenberg maintains, to unfit a person for art, has Rosenberg himself become at least partially unfit for art because of his "delectation" in *Gold Diggers of 1936,* an enthusiasm that surely must extend to many other examples of the genre?

Item: Small children indeed "everywhere spontaneously express themselves," more or less, with "whatever art materials they find," but adults, similarly, not just because of the presence of "mass-cult," but because of much more complex factors not unknown to behavioral scientists, factors which render spontaneity "rarely attainable later on" (as Rosenberg says of the "authenticity" with which youngsters react to art).

Allow me a final note of aesthetic puzzlement: Why—for an article upholding high culture—use a title reverberating with that *frisson* some mass-cultists may experience at the chance of using a "chic" foreign phrase?

FRED WYSZKOWSKI

BERNARD ROSENBERG *replies:*

Mr. Wyszkowski's thoughtful letter deserves an extended reply. Because space is so precious, I must deal with the "items" which do not hold "water" even more elliptically than my critic raises them:

1. Better nothing than Arthur Miller. But I wrote of public, even proletarian, responsiveness to Shakespeare, Molière, and genuine dramatists of our day, suggesting that a turn away from Broadway, Culture Centers, and their values would make theater available to multitudes for whom it is currently unavailable.

2. Of course changes in public attitudes are "at least partially" a reflection of actual events. By the same token, because mass culture has a totalitarian potential reaching into every corner of our lives, we are more manipulable under its impact than in the absence of propaganda that can be instantaneously disseminated to whole populations.

3. Elementary, my dear Wyszkowski. How your little recapitulation relates to any part of my argument I do not know.

4. I said a good deal of how one unfits a man for the other. A little may be homeopathic.

5. My analogies were sexual and gustatory. Like other human needs, the aesthetic sense can be sustained or destroyed. It need not be eliminated any more than taste buds or libidinal impulses.

6. The title, not mine, bothered me as much as it did Mr. W.

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November 8, 1968

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BOB ALLEN

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